April 22, 1985

THE NEW YORKER

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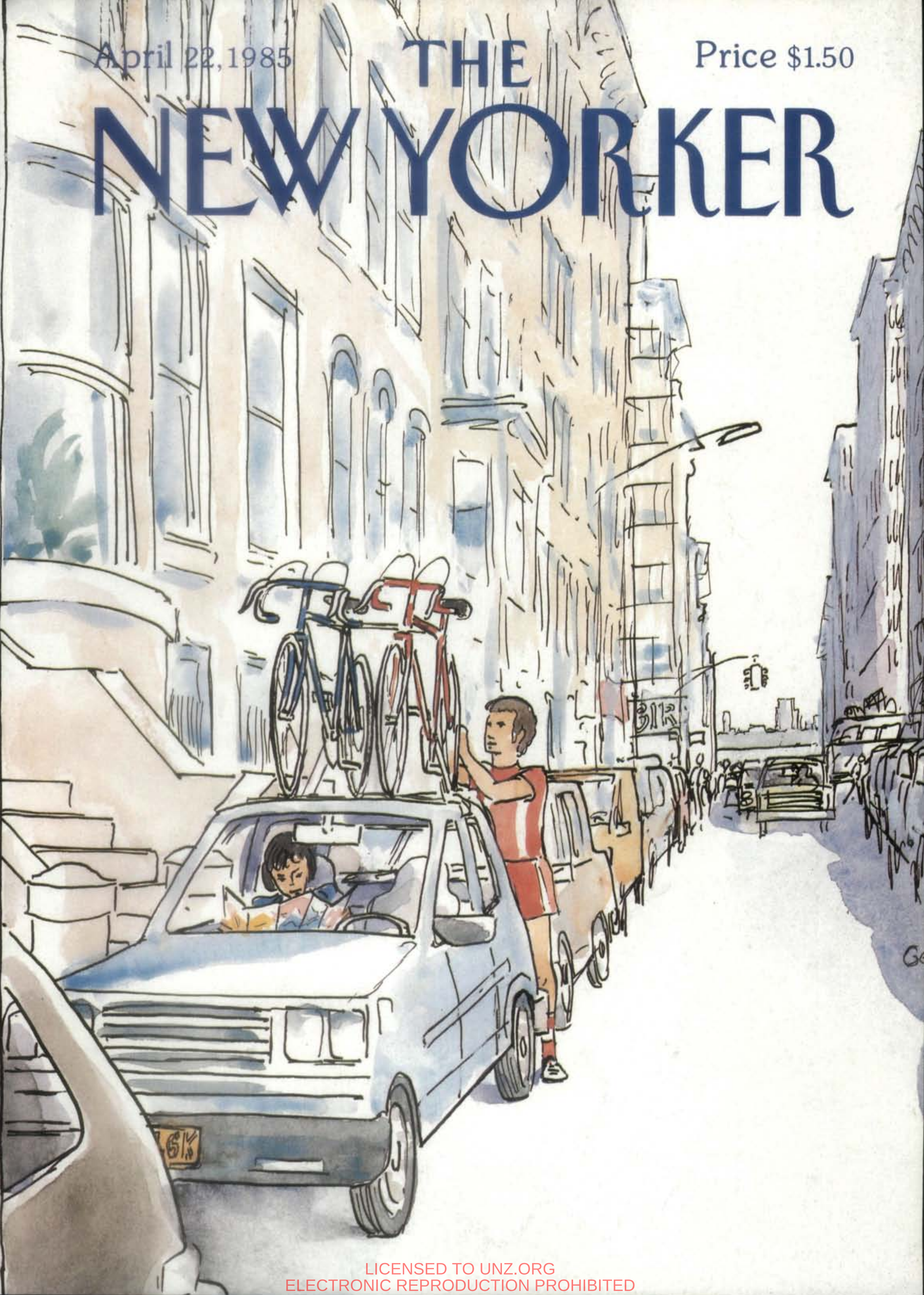

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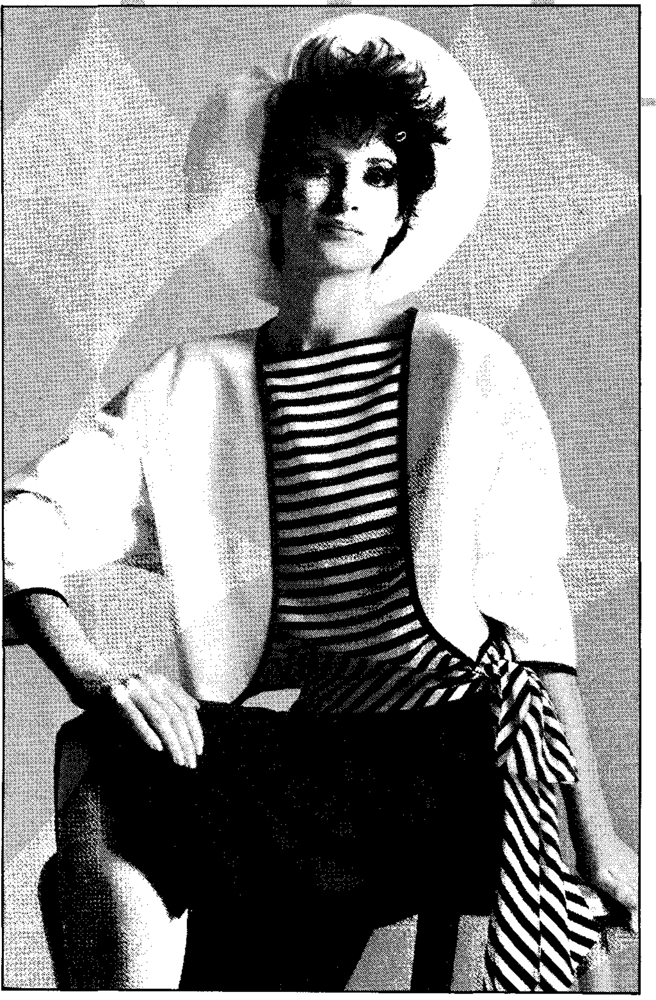

GRAPHIC STATEMENT

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

AMERI/CAIN GOTHIC—A play by Paul Carter Harrison, with Moses Gunn and Sylvia Miles. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

AS IS—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/25/85.) (Circle Repertory Company Theatre, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Wednesday through Friday at 8; Saturday at 7 and 10; and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 21, and will reopen on Broadway at the Lyceum Theatre with previews beginning Friday, April 26.)

BIG RIVER—A musical based on Mark Twain's novel "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," with a score and lyrics by Roger Miller and a book by William Hauptman. Staged by Des McAnuff. Previews through Wednesday, April 24. Opens officially on Thursday, April 25. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

BILOXI BLUES—A comedy that verges on autohagiography, the hero being the author, Neil Simon, as a young Army draftee who, in 1943, is struggling to assume the mantle of writer. Matthew Broderick is the attractive star, and Barry Miller is superb as a young but already wizened Jewish intellectual. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE—Roy Dotrice gives a marvellous performance as Dr. Stockmann, missing none of the complexity or the humor in the role, in the Roundabout's satisfying production of Ibsen's play. Directed by Frank Hauser, who was also its co-translator. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

EPISODE 26—A play by Howard Korder. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

EQUITY LIBRARY THEATRE—A revival of Ira Levin's 1978 thriller **DEATHTRAP** is the seventh in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, April 28. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

THE FOREIGNER—A very funny play by (and with) Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably by Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (11/19/84) (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

GRIND—A vigorous but curiously sad musical about a burlesque house in Chicago during the depths of the Depression. Splendidly acted, under the direction of Harold Prince, by Ben Vereen, Leilani Jones, Timothy Nolen, and Stubby Kaye. The exceptionally vivid setting is by Clarke Dunham. The book is by Fay Kanin, the music by Larry Grossman, and the lyrics by Ellen Fitzhugh. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

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HANNAH SENESH—A monologue based on the diaries and poems of the Zionist heroine. Lori Wilner is the monologuist. Written and directed by David Schechter, with music by Steven Lutvak, Elizabeth Swados, and Mr. Schechter. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 2:30 and 5:30.)

JOE EGG—A superb performance of Peter Nichols' matchless, bleak comedy. Jim Dale and Stockard Channing are the parents of the hopelessly brain-damaged child, and they are supported by John Tillinger, Margaret Hilton, Joanna Gleason, and Tenney Walsh. Arvin Brown was the director. (1/14/85) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE KING AND I—Yul Brynner making what is advertised as his farewell appearance in the musical that he has made his own for several decades. An excellent production in every respect and well worth seeing, for the first or fiftieth time. (1/14/85) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

KUNI-LEML—A musical based on a Yiddish play written in 1880 by Avrom Goldfadn, with a book by Nahma Sandrow, lyrics by Richard Engquist, and music by Raphael Crystal. Performed in English. (Audrey Wood, 359 W. 48th St. 307-5452. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5:30.)

A KURT WEILL CABARET—A return engagement of a program of Weill songs, performed by Martha Schlamme and Alvin Epstein. (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2370. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday at 2:30 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 21.)

LEADER OF THE PACK—A mock-musical devoted to performing two dozen songs of the early sixties written by Ellie Greenwich, who turns up in person. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Through Sunday, April 28: Victor Herbert's **MLLE. MODISTE**. (334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

MANEUVERS—An English suspense thriller by Catherine Muschamp. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM—A rousing play from start to finish. The author is August Wilson, the director is Lloyd Richards, and the marvellous cast includes Charles S. Dutton and

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Theresa Merritt. (10/22/84) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Mirror Repertory Company—Two of four revivals performed in alternating repertory. **VIVAT! VIVAT REGINA!**: A poky presentation of Robert Bolt's shallow play about Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth I, but with a splendid performance by Geraldine Page, as Elizabeth. (3/25/85) . . . **RICHARD II**: Ellis Rabb will direct and play the title role in a production of Shakespeare's tragedy which begins previews on Thursday, April 18, and will open officially on Thursday, April 25, at 6:30. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3. For tickets and information about play scheduling, call 223-6440.)

Pack of Lies—Hugh Whitemore has written a quiet little melodrama, based on an actual event, about the tracking down of Russian spies in a London suburb. Well acted by Rosemary Harris, Patrick McGoohan, George N. Martin, and Dana Ivey. (2/25/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Penn & Teller—A two-man show. Preview Wednesday, April 17. Opens officially on Thursday, April 18, at 6:45. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 8 and 11; Saturday, April 20, at 3 and 8; and Saturday, April 27, at 3, 7, and 10.)

Salonika—Louise Page's mysterious, fascinating play—an English import—takes place in the present but is literally haunted by the past. The setting is the beach at Salonika in Greece, where a great disaster befell the British Army during the First World War. The acting is exceptionally good: Jessica Tandy plays an old woman who has come to put flowers on her husband's grave, Elizabeth Wilson plays her spinster daughter, and David Strathairn, Thomas Hill, and Maxwell Caulfield appear in the other roles. John Madden was the excellent director. (4/15/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 3.)

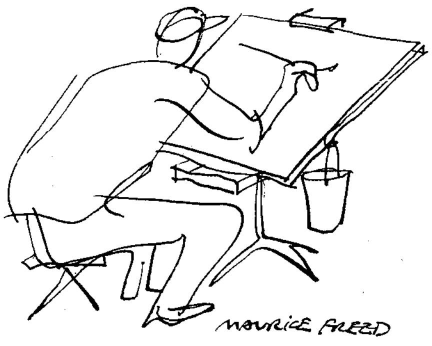
September in the Rain—This modest, quiet play, a British import by John Godber, covers about thirty years in the marriage of a Yorkshire coal miner and his wife, who spend their holidays on the beach at Blackpool. With Susan Greenhill and Steve Ryan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Hudson Guild, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 21.)

The Singular Dorothy Parker—Jane Connell in a one-woman show based on the life and writings of Miss Parker. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Strange Interlude—Wherein Eugene O'Neill makes a hash of Freud and Joyce and produces a tiresome near-farce, tiresomely misdirected by Keith Hack. The cast includes Glenda Jackson, Edward Petherbridge, Brian Cox, James Hazeldine, Elizabeth Lawrence, and Tom Aldredge. (3/4/85) (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays and Thursdays through Saturdays at 6:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 2.)

3 Guys Naked from the Waist Down—John Kassir, Scott Bakula, and Jerry Colker play three standup comedians who leave New York for Hollywood in this satiric and most original musical comedy. Mr. Colker wrote the book and lyrics, and Michael Rupert wrote the bountiful, engaging score. The effective scenery, costumes, and lighting were by Clarke Dunham, Tom McKinley, and Ken Billington. (2/18/85) (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10:15; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Tracers—The eight good actors are Vietnam veterans, and the effective play is based on actual war experiences. It was conceived and directed by John DiFusco, and it is accompanied throughout by rock music. (2/4/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3.)



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Young Playwrights Festival—Three of the four plays here presented are by beginners, and the oldest of them is eighteen; the directors and actors, on the other hand, are agile and experienced. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays and Saturday, April 27, at 3. Closes Sunday, April 28.)

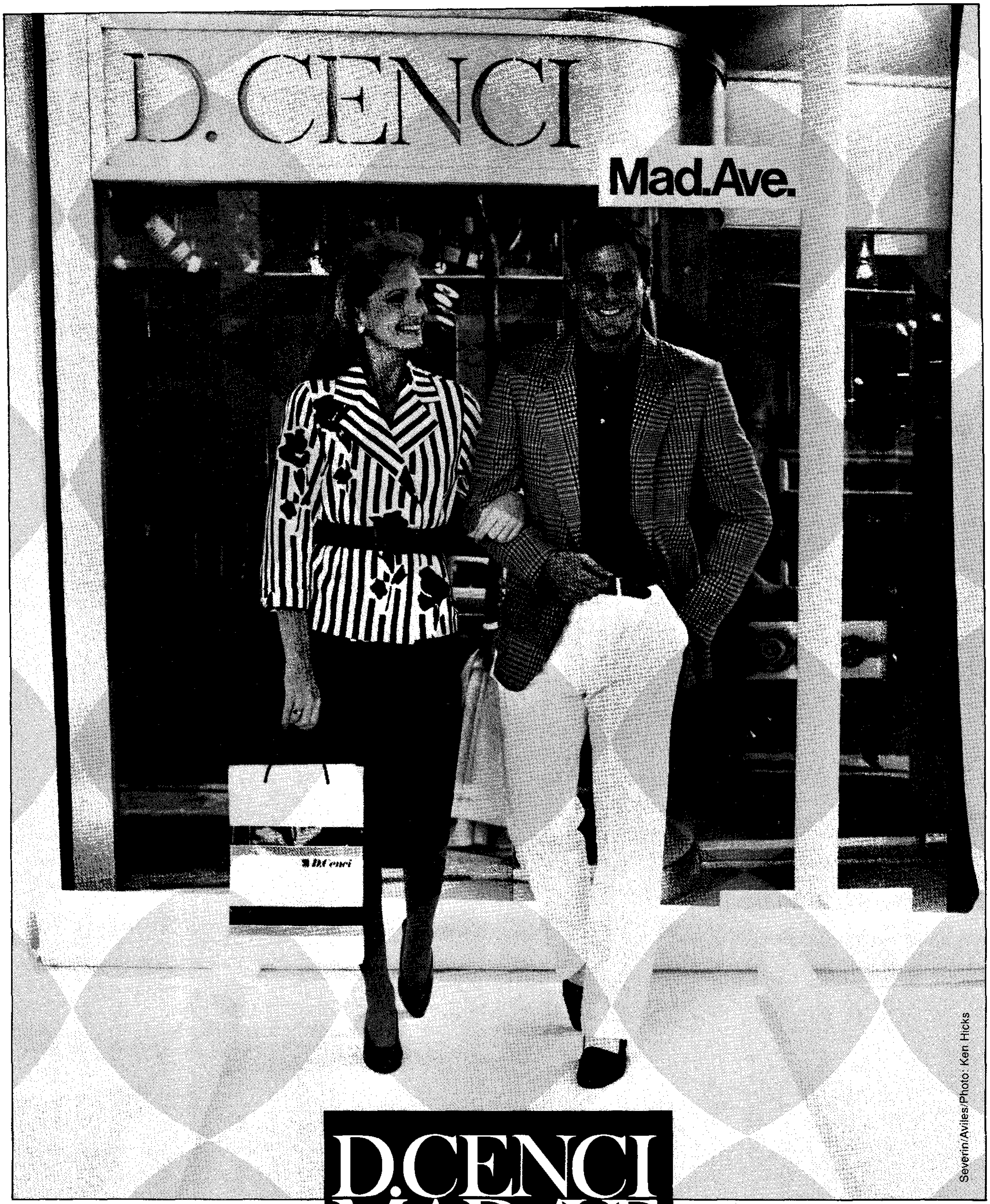
Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS**: A remembrance of things past, by Neil Simon. The hero is a sex-obsessed fifteen-year-old. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES**: A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. The two stars are Van Johnson and George Hearn. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS**: Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE**: A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DREAMGIRLS**: The slickest possible production of a musical comedy whose book, music, and lyrics are almost totally lacking in character. If Michael Bennett, the director, had been a Union general, the Civil War would have lasted about twenty minutes. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS**: 10,392 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FOOL FOR LOVE**: Sam Shepard's play—mysterious, funny, and beautiful—is about two battling, loving lovers in a motel room at the edge of the Mojave Desert and about many other matters as well. Katherine Cortez and David Andrews have the leading roles. Mr. Shepard directed. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET**: Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **HURLYBURLY**: David Rabe's wry, brilliant comedy about la vie de bohème in Hollywood is very well performed under Mike Nichols' dynamic direction. With Ron Silver, Christine Baranski, Susan Anton, Danny Aiello, and Jerry Stiller. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ISN'T IT ROMANTIC**: A spirited production of Wendy Wasserstein's sometimes painful but always witty comedy about a pair of female "best friends" at age twenty-eight, and especially about the trials of one of them, Janie Blumberg. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**: Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!**: A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE REAL THING**: A very funny and yet unnerving comedy by Tom Stoppard. The cast is headed by Nicol Williamson and Laila Robins. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE**: Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine have invented a highly entertaining musical about Georges Seurat and his celebrated painting of the island of La Grande Jatte. Harry Groener is Seurat and Maryann Plunkett is Seurat's model and mistress. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE TAP DANCE KID**: An attractive cast does much to brighten what is otherwise a curiously gloomy musical about a black family making good. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **TORCH SONG TRILOGY**: Three plays—humorous, sad, sentimental, and witty—by and with Harvey Fierstein, who appears Tuesday through Friday evenings. Philip Astor replaces Mr. Fierstein Monday and Saturday evenings and at the matinée performances. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

MISCELLANY

The Circus—Tigers, elephants, horses, chimpanzees, and assorted canines are features of Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's latest three-ring edition. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 1:30 and 7:30; Thursdays at 10:30 and 7:30; Saturdays at 10:30, 2:30, and 7:30; and Tuesdays at 10:30 and 2:30. Through Sunday, June 2.)

Magic Show—A performance by Le Grand David Magic Company, presented by the Society of American Magicians. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. Saturday, April 20, at 8. Tickets at the door beginning at 11 A.M. on the day of the performance.)

New Amsterdam Theatre Company—Patrice Munsel and John Reardon in a concert version of **MUSIC IN THE AIR**, composed by Jerome Kern, with lyrics and book by Oscar Hammerstein. Conducted by Michael Battistelli. (Town



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Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Sunday, April 21, at 5, and Monday, April 22, at 8.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Opening performances (tentative schedule) of an engagement that will run through Sunday, June 23—Tuesday evening, April 23: "Square Dance," "Bugaku," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, April 24: "Walpurgisnacht Ballet," "Pas de Deux," "Bugaku," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, April 25: "Square Dance," "Afternoon of a Faun," "Eight Lines," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ Friday evening, April 26: "Walpurgisnacht Ballet," "Pas de Deux," "Fancy Free," and "Gounod Symphony." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, April 27: "Valse-Fantaisie," "Tzigane," "Fancy Free," and "La Valse." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, April 27: "Walpurgisnacht Ballet," "Bugaku," and "Stars and Stripes." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 1.)

American Ballet Theatre—Opening performances of an eight-week engagement that will run through Saturday, June 15—Monday, April 22, at 7:30; Tuesday, April 23, at 8; Wednesday, April 24, at 2 and 8; and Thursday, April 25, at 8: "Romeo and Juliet." . . . ¶ Friday, April 26, at 8: "Duets," "The Little Ballet," "Donizetti Variations" (company première), and "Raymonda." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 27, at 2: "Donizetti Variations," "Great Galloping Gottschalk," and "Raymonda." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 27, at 8: "Les Sylphides," "Field, Chair, and Mountain" (New York première), "Pas de Deux," and "Theme and Variations." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Martha Graham Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday, April 17, at 8: "Frescoes," "Andromache's Lament," and "The Rite of Spring." . . . ¶ Thursday, April 18, at 8: "Appalachian Spring," "Judith," and "Episodes." . . . ¶ Friday, April 19, at 8: "Diversion of Angels," "Frontier," "Hérodiade," and "Night Journey." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 20, at 2: "Andromache's Lament," "Night Journey," and "Song." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 20, at 8: "Judith," "Hérodiade," and "Cortege of Eagles." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 21, at 2: "Judith," "Hérodiade," and "Night Journey." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 21, at 7: "Appalachian Spring," "Song," and "The Rite of Spring." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Paul Taylor Dance Company—Wednesday evening, April 17, and Wednesday evening, April 24: "Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rehearsal)," "Equinox," and "Cloven Kingdom." . . . ¶ Thursday evening, April 18: "Roses," "Runes," and "Esplanade." . . . ¶ Friday evening, April 19: "Diggity," "Private Domain," and "Airs." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, April 20, and Thursday evening, April 25: "Arden Court," "Snow White," "Profiles," and "Last Look." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, April 21, and Friday evening, April 26: "Aureole," "3 Epitaphs," ". . . Byzantium," and "Sunset." . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, April 23, and Saturday evening, April 27: "Mercuric Tidings," "Lost, Found, and Lost," and "Dust." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, May 5.)

Feld Ballet—Wednesday, April 17, at 8: "The Real McCoy," "Impromptu," "Summer's Lease," and "Intermezzo No. 1." . . . ¶ Thursday, April 18, at 8: "Intermezzo No. 2," "Against the Sky," and "Adieu." . . . ¶ Friday, April 19, at 8: "The Grand Canon," "Impromptu," "Against the Sky," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 20, at 8: "La Vida," "Danzon Cubano," "Over the Pavement," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 21, at 2: "La Vida," "Danzon Cubano," "Adieu," and "A Footstep of Air." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 21, at 7:30: "The Grand Canon," "Impromptu," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Intermezzo No. 2." . . . ¶ Tuesday, April 23, at 8: "The Grand Canon," "Summer's Lease," and "Straw Hearts." . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 24, at 8: "The Envelope," "Caught," "Over the Pavement," and "Straw Hearts." . . . ¶ Thursday, April 25, at 7:30: A benefit program, with guest performer Peter Allen; for tickets, call 777-7710. . . . ¶ Friday, April 26, at 8: "The Grand Canon," "Adieu," and "The Jig Is Up." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 27, at 8: "The Real McCoy," "Summer's Lease," and "Straw Hearts." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Sunday, May 12.)

Pilar Rioja—Programs of flamenco dance. (Reportorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays and Saturday, April 20, at 3. Through Sunday, April 28.)

Calck Hook Dance Theatre—Presenting "2TENTS" and "Goodfellow's Dilemma." (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 8, and Saturdays at 8 and midnight. For tickets, call 279-4200.)

Solomons Company/Dance—Presenting "Steps 9: Raw Meet," a new full-length work. (Midtown Y, 344 E. 14th St. Saturday, April 20, at 7 and 10, and Sunday, April 21, at 8. For tickets, call 673-2207.)

Dance Interviews—John Curry being interviewed by John Gruen. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Monday, April 22, at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

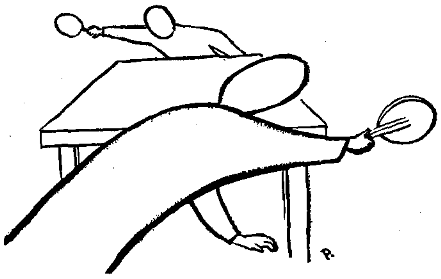
Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Tuesdays through Saturdays, **STEVE ROSS** sings and plays piano in the Oak Room. Shows start at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Pianist Buck Buchholz occupies the Rose Room Sundays from five-thirty to eleven. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Very small, very narrow, very chatty, and very nautical. Detroit hard-bop pianist **BARRY HARRIS,** who is very good, leads a trio on Friday and Saturday, April 19-20; on Friday and Saturday, April 26-27, pianist Niels Landoky's trio will be aboard. Sets at ten, eleven-thirty, and one. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is here, singing in her small, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays at six-thirty.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A source of consummate singers right now: **BETTY CARTER,** the risk-taker jazz singer whose vocals soar, swoop, dip, stop, seemingly fall out of a tree, and then take off again, is here through Sunday, April 21. Monday, April 22, will belong to pianist **RONNIE MATHEWS** and his band, and on Tuesday, April 23, **JON HENDRICKS & COMPANY** will arrive. Music from nine. Saxophonist **MONTY WATERS** conducts after-hours (real late, after the last set) jam sessions every night but Monday. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The oh-so-varied lineup: Wednesday, April 17, guitarist **JOHN TROPEA,** saxophonist **GEORGE YOUNG,** and their quintet, and violinist Noel Pointer; Friday and Saturday, April 19-20, tenor legend **SONNY ROLLINS;** and Wednesday through Sunday, April 24-28, Oakland-based R. & B.-ists **TOWER OF POWER.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.



Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—The jazz, in the form of piano-bass duos: **VLADIMIR SHAFRANOV** and **RON CARTER** through Sunday, April 21, and **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and his bassist starting Monday, April 22. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Tuesdays through Saturdays, in the Café Carlyle, **BOBBY SHORT** pays exuberant homage to Porter, Coward, Rodgers & Hart, Gershwin, and Kern with aid from bassist **BEVERLY PEER** and drummer **ROBBIE SCOTT.** Shows at ten and midnight. **VINCE GIORDANO** & the Nighthawks play for dancing Sundays and Mondays from nine to one. Dining. . . . ¶ In the Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** reigns over the keyboard and sings a bit, too. Her sets get going at ten Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The Bowery Institute of Rock and Roll. Monday is showcase night. Music from long after nine-thirty.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—Bluegrass, string-band, and Irish music in a de-citified, wholesome (as wholesome as pitchers of beer can be) back room. Wednesday, April 17, Dolores Keane, James Kelly, and Tony MacMahon; Saturday, April 20, the Mountain Laurel Bluegrass Band; Wednesday, April 24, Seamus Egan and Jerry O'Sullivan; and Saturday, April 27, **SKYLINE,** with banjoist **TONY TRISCHKA.** There is Irish music on Mondays and Fridays. Music from eight on Wednesdays and Thursdays and from nine Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Vibraharpist **ROY AYERS** leads a combo through Sunday, April 21, and on Tuesday, April 23, keyboardist and singer **LES MC CANN** will move in. Mondays are claimed by guitarist and inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, who was once known as Rhubarb Red. No doubt his garage and household effects and recording-studio implements will someday be found in the Smithsonian. Sets begin after nine. Dining.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Considerably more musical than Tie City or Food City. Wednesday, April 17, Alex Chilton, R. Stevie Moore, and Clambake; Friday, April 19, **ERIC ANDERSEN;** Saturday, April 20, Texas folkie **TOWNES VAN ZANDT** and David Massengill; Sunday, April 21, Danny Driscoll, Kathleen Keenan, and Kurt Weiting; and Monday, April 22, Sonny Ochs. Mondays are hootennany nights. Shows are usually at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy bar and back-room restaurant with a piano in it. Stride specialist **DICK WELLSTOOD** will play on Wednesday, April 17, and Friday and Saturday, April 19-20; **JAKI BYARD** will be the pianist on Thursday, April 18; and on Tuesday, April 23, **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** another stride player, will take charge. Sundays Jane Jarvis has the floor, and Mondays **DICK HYMAN** performs. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant and bar that is crowded with good listeners listening to good piano-bass teams. The piano-bass teams: **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** and **RED MITCHELL** through Saturday, April 20, and starting Tuesday, April 23, **JOHN BUNCH** and **PHIL FLANIGAN.** Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Wednesday, April 17, Kingfish and New Riders of the Purple Sage; Thursday, April 18, Freddie McGregor, June Lodge, Michigan & Smiley, Peter Broggs, and the Studio One Band; Friday, April 19, **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL;** Wednesday, April 24, New Orleans pianist **DR. JOHN;** and Thursday, April 25, **JUMP STREET,** a soulful ten-piece outfit, and singer Delbert McClinton. Dining.

Lush Life, 184 Thompson St., at Bleecker St. (228-3788)—**THE WIDESPREAD JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

SWASHBUCKLER IN BUCKSKIN: HERO OR HAREBRAIN?

George Armstrong Custer. He was called the Napoleon of the Plains, the Last of the Cavaliers. But his cavalier attitude may have been his downfall. As new evidence about Little Big Horn emerges, can Custer still pass muster as a hero?

⁂

Or was the real hero of those days an unsung, unexpected one? A man who had no last stand, but hundreds of sittings? A painter named Thomas Eakins who was ignored during his lifetime, but is now considered by many the greatest American painter of the 19th century?

⁂

Find out on "Heroes and the Test of Time," a Smithsonian World television special airing April 24th on the Public Broadcasting Service. Your host will be author and historian David McCullough.

SMITHSONIAN WORLD

A PBS Television Series funded by the James S. McDonnell Foundation. Co-produced by WETA, Washington, D.C. and the Smithsonian Institution.

MCDONNELL DOUGLAS

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occupies the bandstand through Saturday, April 20; on Tuesday, April 23, singer and pianist **MOSE ALLISON**, the simultaneously rural and urbane Mississippian, will arrive. On Sundays *the Duke Ellington Society's* Salute to the Duke continues, and Monday's music is provided by **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI'S BIG BAND**, featuring **LEW TABACKIN** on tenor sax. Sets begin at eight-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and at nine on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock from the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom: Thursday, April 18, Scandal, featuring Patty Smyth; Sunday, April 21, from 2 P.M. until 2 A.M., a Jazzathon, with the **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND**, **AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS**, and other participants; and Tuesday, April 23, Subhumans Scream and Murphy's Law. Shows tend to begin sometime after eleven. Dancing.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to Brazilian music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. On its busy weekends, the club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesday, April 17, Tabou Combo; Thursday, April 18, **MIKATA**; Friday and Saturday, April 19-20, **PÉ-DE-BOI**; Sunday, April 21, Kenia; Tuesday through Thursday, April 23-25, tenor-sax wailer **GATO BARBIERI**; and Friday and Saturday, April 26-27, reggae poet **LINTON KWESI JOHNSON**. Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The **DAVID MURRAY OCTET**, hip, swinging, out-there, melodic, gleeful, and totally savvy, is here through Sunday, April 21; on Monday, April 22, the bandstand will belong to singer **DAKOTA STATON**; and on Tuesday, April 23, tenor saxophonist **CHICO FREEMAN** will bring in a quartet. Shows from about ten. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Mondays after nine are salsa nights in the barnlike downstairs room. On April 22, **WILLIE ROSARIO**, **LUIS (PERICO) ORTIZ**, and trumpeter **JON FADDIS**, the guest jazz soloist, will all be on hand. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **MICHAEL ABENE** and **MICHAEL MOORE** perform piano-bass duets every night but Monday. And, in addition, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** plays Tuesdays with her combo. Sets begin at nine-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world are attracted to this famous, unpretentious basement establishment, fifty years old this year. Tenor saxophonist **GEORGE COLEMAN** heads up a quartet through Sunday, April 21, and on Tuesday, April 23, another fine tenor player, **JOE HENDERSON**, will descend the stairs with his sextet. Monday night's tradition is the **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND**. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food (Columbia University is just across Broadway), beyond the pinball machines is a room full of live jazz. Baritone crooner **ARTHUR PRYSOCK** is onstage through Saturday, April 20. Music from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and pianists or guitarists and bassists in it. The music schedule: pianist **WALTER NORRIS** and bassist Brian Torff through Saturday, April 20; starting Tuesday, April 23, pianist **BILL MAYS** and bassist **GEORGE DUVIVIER**; guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** on Sundays; and pianist Jim Roberts and Brian Torff every Monday. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Thursday, April 18, at 8.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ—With Lionel Hampton, Harold Singer, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-3757. Thursday, April 18, at 8.)

JEAN REDPATH—Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Friday, April 19, at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 988-4468.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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WARREN VACHÉ, JR., BUCKY PIZZARELLI, AND JOHN PIZZARELLI, JR.—In a tribute to Pee Wee Erwin. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, April 19, at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

RICHARD THOMPSON—With David Lindley. (Beacon Theatre. Saturday, April 20, at 8.)

AMERICAN FOLK ROOTS—The sixth in a series of eight concerts, this one devoted to Cajun music. With Beausoleil and Canray Fontenot. (Carnegie Recital Hall. 247-7800. Saturday, April 20, at 8:30. . . . ¶ Alternative Museum, 17 White St., three blocks south of Canal St., at Sixth Ave. 966-4444. Sunday, April 21, at 8.)

PATTI BOWN—With her trio. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-2200. Sunday, April 21, at 7:30.)

EARL KLUGH—Beacon Theatre. Saturday, April 27, at 8.

JAMAALADEEN TACUMA—Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, April 27, at 8:30.

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL—Monday, April 22, at 8: General Public. . . . ¶ Tuesday, April 23, at 8: Joan Armatrading. . . . ¶ Wednesday through Saturday, April 24-27, at 8, and Sunday, April 28, at 3 and 8: Willie Nelson and Family. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

JACOBO BORGES—Figurative drawings and works on paper in assorted mediums, including pastels, marble powder, graphite, acrylics, and sand. Through May 18. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

JUDY CHICAGO—Miss Chicago enlisted a sewing circle of a hundred and fifty to carry out her needlework designs based on childbirth themes. There are twenty-five of them here. Through Saturday, April 27. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

ANTONI CLAVÉ—Paintings, drawings, sculptures, and prints by an abstractionist. Through May 31. (Silberberg, 16 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

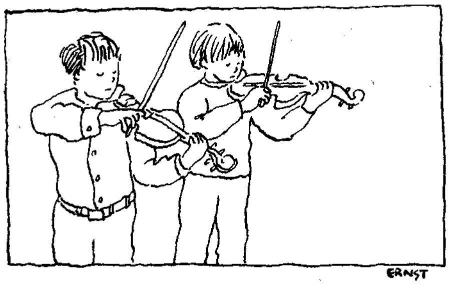
VICTOR ELMALEH—Recent paintings. Through May 4. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

ARTHUR ERICKSON—Models and drawings by a Canadian architect. Through June 6. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

HERBERT FERBER / LUDWIG SANDER (1906-75)—Abstract metal sculptures from the fifties and sixties. Through May 2. / Small-scale color-field paintings and charcoal drawings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

JAMES GUY (1910-83) **AND LOUIS SCHANKER** (1903-81)—Paintings, drawings, and lithographs from the thirties and forties by two American modernists. Through May 18. (Diamond, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

LE CORBUSIER (1887-1965)—Architectural drawings of various projects, including a chapel at Ronchamp, France, and the city plan of Chandigarh, India. Through May 18. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St. Opens at noon.)



ABBY LEIGH—Highly stylized oils of figures and landscapes. Through May 18. (A. M. Adler, 21 E. 67th St.)

DAVID LEVINE—Watercolors of Coney Island (on and off the boardwalk) and portraits, including a selection of caricatures. Through May 10. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

ALBERT MARQUET (1875-1947)—A large retrospective of paintings and drawings, including many of the water scenes—the Seine, for instance—for which he was famous. Through May 17. (Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

HENRI MATISSE (1869-1954)—A two-gallery exhibit: Drawings in ink, pencil, and charcoal at Davidson, 43 E. 78th St.; and prints (next door) at Isselbacher, 41 E. 78th St. Through May 18.

JOAN MITCHELL—Abstract paintings from the sixties. Through May 4. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

SUSAN ROTHENBERG—The artist has added splashes of color—yellows, reds—in her new canvases. Through May 18. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

THEODOROS STAMOS—Paintings from the mid-forties to the early sixties, the period when the artist's work advanced toward, and reached, Abstract Expressionism. Through May 25. (Ericson, 23 E. 74th St.)

SALLY VAGLIANO—Paintings on panels, and trompe-l'oeil paintings of panels. Through May 4. (Sachs, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

ALBERT YORK—Recent small-scale landscapes and floral still-lifes, plus a selection of earlier works. Through Saturday, April 27. (Davis & Langdale, 746 Madison Ave., at 65th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **COLNAGHI**, 26 E. 80th St.: Drawings by French artists from 1760-1880, including works by Girodet, Isabey, and Corot. Through May 23. (Open Mondays.) . . . **HIRSCHL & ADLER**, 21 E. 70th St.: Turn-of-the-century paintings, sculptures, architectural drawings and sketches, and stained glass by American artists, including Daniel Chester French, Thomas Dewing, John LaFarge, and Louis Comfort Tiffany. Through May 31.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

GREGORY AMENOFF—Recent abstract paintings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

LUIS CRUZ AZACETA / WILLIAM BECKMAN—"Self-Portrait as Mechanized Doggie" steals this show of paintings and drawings. / Plein-air landscape sketches in oil. Through May 2. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

MAX BECKMANN (1884-1950) / **MARTIN CHIRINO**—Paintings and drawings by a German Expressionist. / Freestanding forged-iron sculptures of head shapes greatly simplified. Through Wednesday, April 24. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

NELL BLAINE—Landscape paintings, chiefly. Through Wednesday, April 24. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

KENNETH CALLAHAN—Abstract oil paintings, plus ink-and-wash landscape drawings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

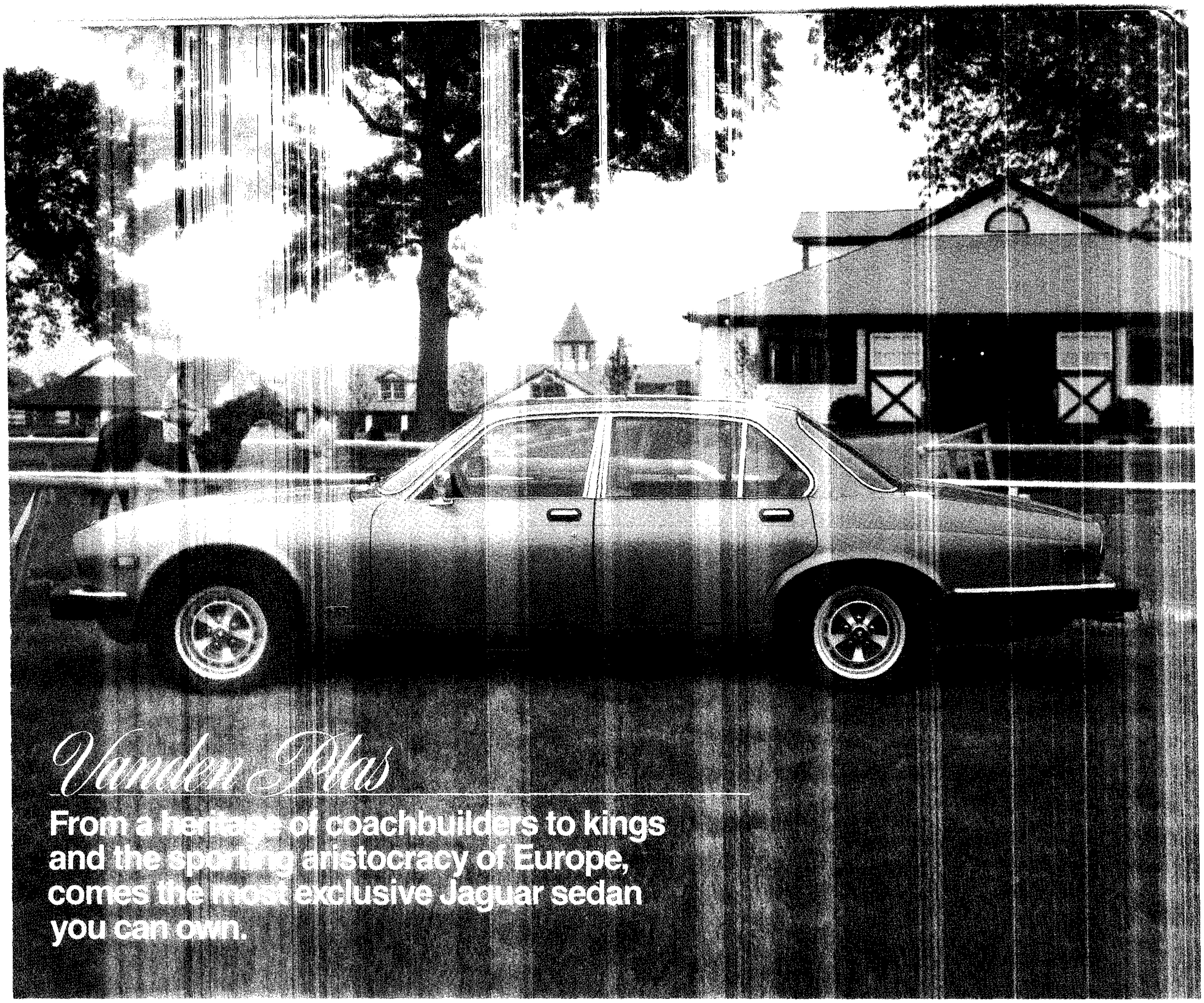
RICHARD CARBONI—Abstract constructions incorporating strips of wood, lengths of cord, and thickly laid-on paint. Through Saturday, April 27. (Getler-Pall-Saper, 50 W. 57th St.)

LYNNE CLIBANOFF—Wall boxes, lit from within to reveal hallways, arches, and cloisters. Through Saturday, April 27. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

THOMAS AQUINAS DALY—Approximately sixty paintings, mostly small watercolors of wildlife, landscapes, and still-lifes. Through Saturday, April 27. (Grand Central Art Galleries, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

MELL DANIEL (1899-1975)—Abstract color drawings distilled from overlapping tree branches. Through Wednesday, April 24. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)

ELIZABETH DE CUEVAS—Preparatory drawings and models for sculptures based on Egyptian,



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Frankly, meant for the very few, this is the most luxurious Jaguar sedan you can buy. Vanden Plas has built custom motorcar bodies and interiors of refinement, opulence and exclusivity for generations. It is in this spirit that Jaguar has created this latest Vanden Plas.

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Since 1837 Tiffany & Co. has nurtured many of the best designers of the modern age. With a strong foundation in the classic principles, these gifted individuals have enchanted the world and honored Tiffany's with their imagination, wit and timeless originality.

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Historically, operas were written to showcase the best voices of the day. So it is with Tiffany's jewelry, china, silver and crystal. Tiffany's exclusive designs are created not for the convenience of mass production but for the deft hands of the finest craftsmen in the world today.

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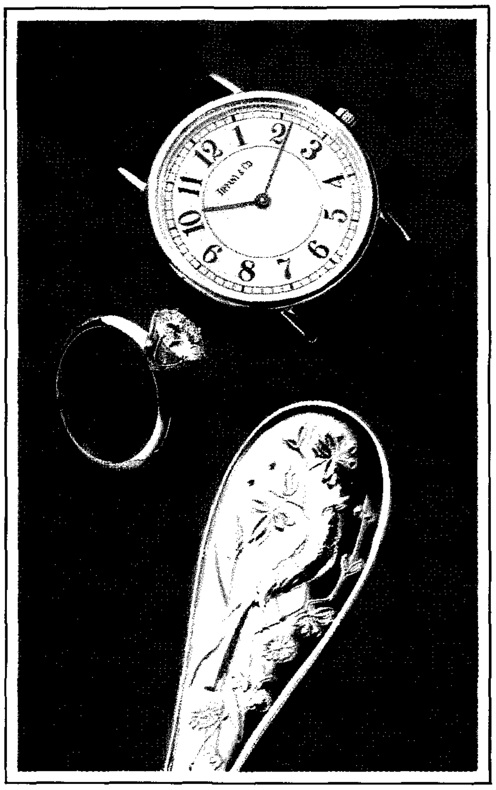
The European craftsmen who make Tiffany's exclusive Private Stock china must polish their trades for more than 20 years before they are individually chosen to hand-paint our designs. The demanding work of blowing Tiffany crystal is entrusted to an exclusive fraternity of artisans, among them an 80-year-old Venetian.



Top: Fourteen karat gold wristwatch for men inspired by classic watch designs. Black onyx crown, lizard strap with Arabic or Roman numerals.

Middle: Diamond and platinum engagement ring in the classic six-prong "Tiffany setting."

Bottom: "Audubon" sterling flatware. Designed by Tiffany's in 1871, this silver recalls Japanese Revival bird prints.

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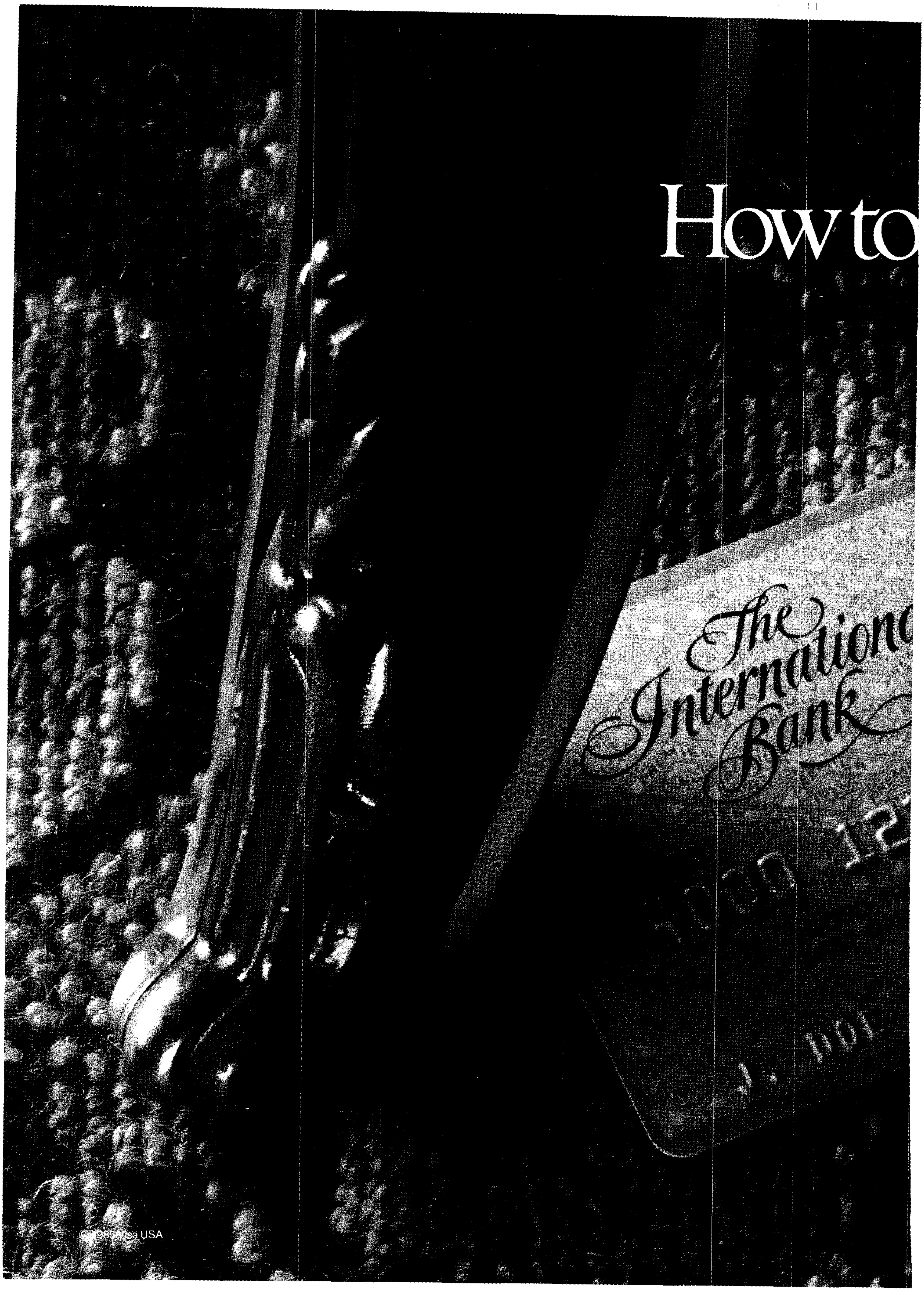
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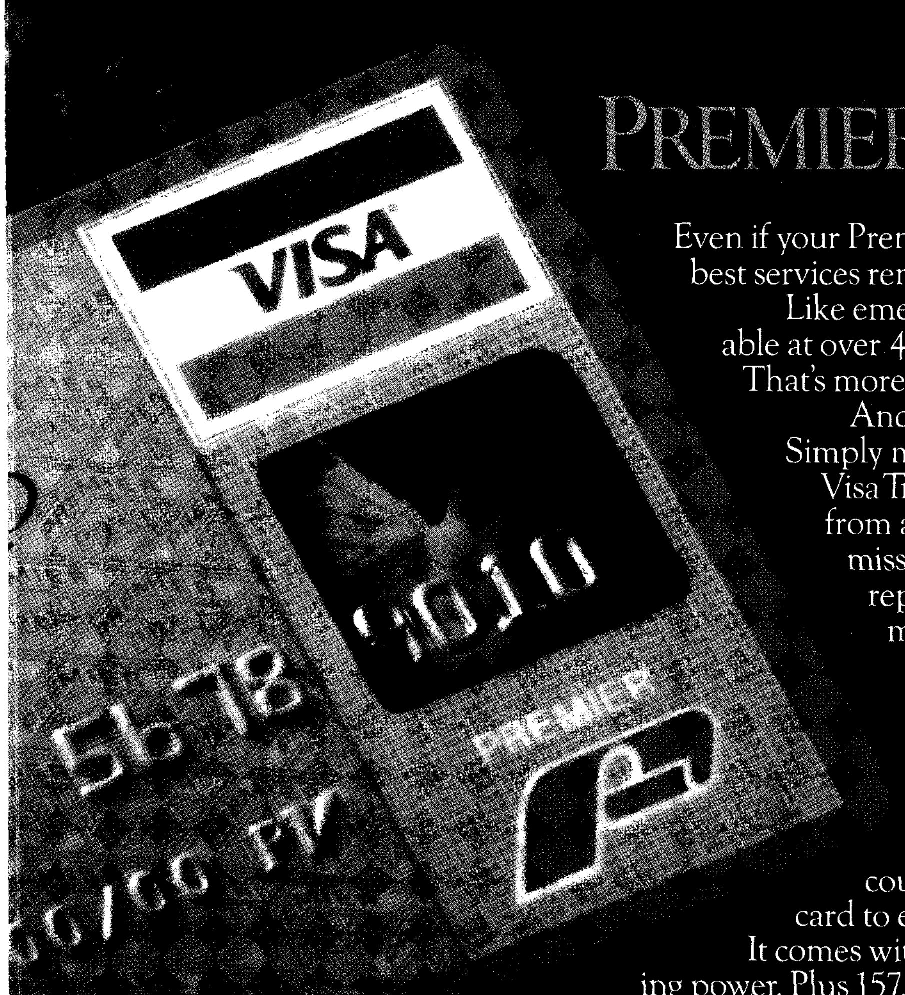

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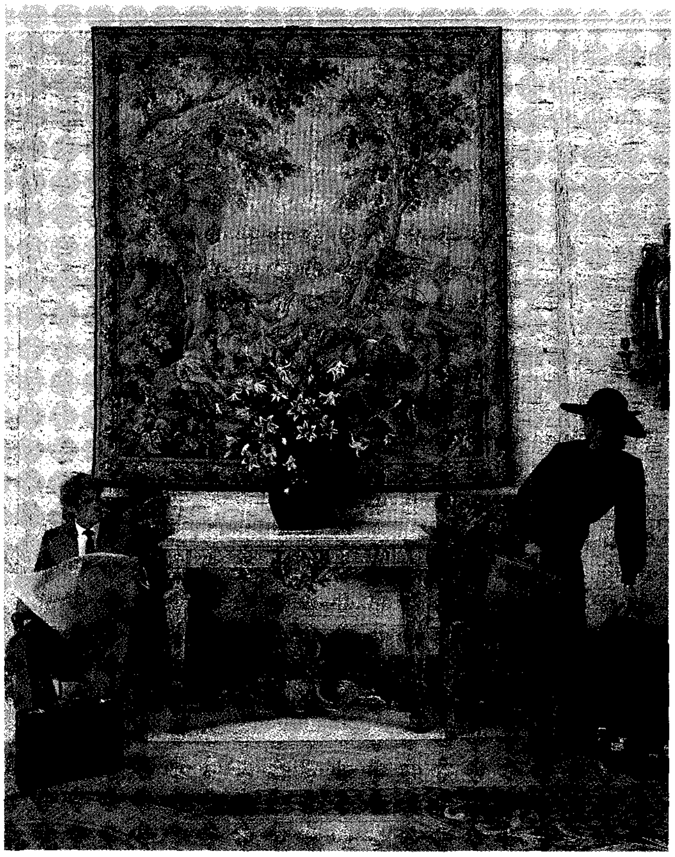

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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Mayan, and Indian motifs. Through May 4. (Iolas-Jackson, 52 E. 57th St.)

David Dewey—Vistas of seashore Maine and Cape May—lighthouses, bungalows, churches—by a watercolorist who is following in Hopper's footsteps. Through April 30. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Martha Diamond—Broadly executed sky-blue paintings of high rises under construction. Through Saturday, April 27. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Yrjö Edelmann—Trompe-l'oeil paintings of bits of paper. Through May 11. (Heidenberg, 50 W. 57th St.)

Maurice Freedman (1904-85)—Landscapes and seascapes, most done in the last ten years of the artist's life. Through May 4. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Philip Guston (1913-80)—Paintings of single subjects—a shoe, a fist, a hooded figure. Through May 4. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Valerie Jaudon—Strong new paintings. Through May 4. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert Jordan—Representational landscapes of the Midwest and New England. Through May 11. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Anselm Kiefer—Paintings in mixed mediums, including lead, along with works on paper. Through May 11. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

David Ligare—Allegorical paintings set in Northern California, where the artist lives. Also, related drawings. Through Wednesday, April 24. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Alice Trumbull Mason (1904-71)—Two shows of works by an American abstractionist: Woodcuts and soft-ground etchings at Washburn, 42 E. 57th St.; and oils at the downtown branch, 113 Greene St. Through Saturday, April 27.

Raymond Mason / Bill Jacklin—Sculptures spanning thirty years, including a large painted wall piece depicting grape pickers at a vineyard in France. / Figurative oils and watercolors on paper. Through Saturday, April 20. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St.)

Frank Metz—Representational paintings of the Maine coast. Through Saturday, April 27. (Haber Theodore, 24 W. 57th St.)

Elie Nadelman (1882-1946) / **John Batho**—Drawings made in the summer of 1921. Through May 4. / Photographs of Monet's garden at Giverny. Through May 11. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ The French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St., has an exhibit of thirty-seven Batho color prints from the past ten years. Through May 31. (Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

George Nick—Landscape paintings of Jerusalem and suburban Boston. Through May 9. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Betty Parsons (1900-82)—A retrospective of driftwood sculptures, as well as watercolors, gouaches, and other works on paper, including a kite with an airplane painted on it. Through May 4. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Pedro Perez—Recent paintings and drawings, plus an installation. Through Saturday, April 27. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

David Reed / Betty Woodman—Colorful abstractions done on panels of various lengths. / Glazed earthenware vases. Through Saturday, April 27. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Riopelle—Acrylic paintings and paper collages with images of flying geese. Through May 11. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mark Rothko (1903-70)—Black canvases and works on paper, the output of his last years. Through Saturday, April 27. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

John Seery—Expressionistic floral paintings. Through May 11. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Ned Smyth / Billy Sullivan—Mosaic reliefs paying homage to the belly dancer. / Oils and pastels. Through Saturday, April 20. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Donald Sultan—Respectful references to Manet and Homer can be seen in this group of new paintings which also includes several monumental still-lifes of lemons painted against a tarry black background, and a deliberately pretty flower arrangement. Through Saturday, April 27. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jonathan Thomas / Ruth Vollmer (1903-82)—Abstractions on wood and canvas, incorporating geometric shapes. / Spheres in various materials, including one in solid acrylic and another in spun aluminum. Through Saturday, April 27. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Harold Tovish—One-way mirrors and plastic spheres, the latter cracked to reveal a form within, are central to the five constructions here. Through Saturday, April 27. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

James Wolfe / Morris Louis (1912-62)—Large sculptures of brightly painted lengths of steel, twisted and bent into simplified figures. Through Saturday, April 20. / Drawings in pen and ink, combined with other mediums. Through Saturday, April 27. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Group Show—Early-twentieth-century Expressionist prints by Munch, Kandinsky, Marc, Dix, Kollwitz, and others. Through May 24. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Peter Agostini / Ed Baynard—Expressionistic terra-cotta sculptures of female figures. / Flower still-lifes in watercolor. Through Saturday, April 27. (Steinbaum, in a new location at 132 Greene St.)

Arakawa—Large-scale abstract paintings. Through May 11. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Jennifer Bartlett—The artist has converted the Cooper gallery into an Antiguan vacation spot, with huge wall paintings of beach and sea, plus large models of Caribbean bungalows, docks, sailboats, a pink fence, dinghies, a shack made of flattened tin cans, and so on, which she used as props for the paintings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Robert Beauchamp—Paintings completed this year and as long ago as 1959, by an Expressionist. Through May 18. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

Howard Ben Tré—Imposing, decorative pillars of solid cast glass, plus a couple of garden benches of the same translucent material. Through Saturday, April 27. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

James Biederman—Wall sculptures in wood, paintings with sculptures projecting out of them, and drawings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

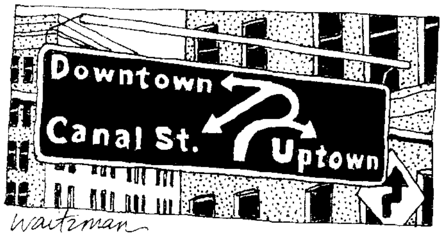
Arnold Bittleman (1933-85)—Landscapes and figure studies in various mediums by an artist who died this month. Through May 8. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

Mel Bochner—Geometric symbols painted on canvases built to fit them. Through Saturday, April 20. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Werner Büttner—Recognizable images are mixed with abstraction in thickly painted canvases. Through Saturday, April 20. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Steven Campbell—Paintings recording the hapless adventures of various sportive types—ivory hunters, for instance, with a decoy elephant. Through Saturday, April 20. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Francesco Clemente—A three-gallery show. Works on paper. Through Saturday, April 20. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.) . . . ¶ Paintings. Through Tuesday, April 23. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.) . . . ¶ More paintings. Through Saturday, April 20. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)



Paula Collery—Recent paintings and drawings, a step or two up from the naïve, plus an installation based on van Gogh's painting of his bedroom at Arles. Through Saturday, April 27. (Germans Van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Jamie Dalglish—Cheerful abstract acrylics, some screened with polka dots and others laced with gold or silver glitter. Through Saturday, April 27. (Rentschler, 72 Greene St.)

Richard Estes—A dozen Photo-Realist paintings. Through Saturday, April 27. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Robert Gordy—Large monotypes of heads, male and female, all of them verging on caricature. Through May 1. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Betti-Sue Hertz / Robert Sussman—Wall sculptures combining painted canvas, wood, and metal. / Bright-colored abstract paintings. Through Saturday, April 20. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

Neil Jenney—Paintings and sculptures from the years 1967 to 1970. Through May 25. (Carpenter+Hochman, 420 West Broadway.)

Joyce Kozloff / Daisy Youngblood—Watercolors of fanciful designs for subway stations which incorporate architectural elements taken from structures throughout the world—two doorways, say, from Urbino's Palazzo Ducale. / Small clay sculptures. Through May 4. (Gladstone, 152 Wooster St.)

Margaret Leveson—Recent landscapes in oil. Through May 1. (Blue Mountain, 121 Wooster St. Tuesdays through Fridays and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Thomas Nozkowski—Small abstractions in oil. Through May 1. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

Anthony Polizzi—Paintings and wall sculptures in designs and colors reminiscent of the Aztecs. First one-man show in New York. Through May 4. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St.)

Peter Saari / John de Andrea—Painted-plaster wall reliefs resembling ancient architectural fragments. / Life-size and utterly realistic polyvinyl sculptures of female nudes. Through Saturday, April 27. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Judith Shahn—Out-of-print silk screens, plus drawings and paintings. Through May 5. (Morningstar, 164 Mercer St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 3 to 6; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 6.)

Harry Soviak (1935-84)—A memorial retrospective of paintings, drawings, collages, and sculptures. Through Saturday, April 27. (Pam Adler, 578 Broadway.)

Robert Stackhouse / Ruth Hardinger—Large watercolor studies for sculptures. Through Saturday, April 27. / Abstract sculptures in mixed mediums finished with spray paint. Through May 2. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

David True—Drawings, paintings, and etchings. Through May 11. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Jack Tworkov (1900-82)—Paintings and works on paper from the seventies, when his textured compositions were founded on geometric forms. Through Wednesday, April 24. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Alexander Luke Wallace—Representational landscapes, still-lifes, and street scenes. Through May 1. (Prince Street Gallery, 121 Wooster St. Tuesdays through Fridays and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

Cora Kelley Ward—Twelve large abstract paintings and drawings. Through Saturday, April 20. (112 Greene Street Gallery.)

Group Shows—At the **Artists Space**, 223 West Broadway: Donald Sultan has organized an exhibit of paintings by five young Spanish artists. Through May 11. . . . **The Drawing Center**, 137 Greene St.: A hundred and twenty-eight drawings on loan from the Museo Correr, in Venice, which represent much of the work done in that city from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century. Through July 27. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **Gibson**, 568 Broadway: Abstract

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paintings by John Armleder, Helmut Federle, Nancy Haynes, Olivier Mosset, Susan Smith, and Merrill Wagner. Through May 1. . . . **VISUAL ARTS GALLERY,** 137 Wooster St.: Paintings by eight former students at the School of Visual Arts, among them Tod Wizon, Jane Swavely, and Barry Bridgwood. Through Sunday, April 21.

OTHER GALLERIES

GROUP SHOW—The opening part of a two-part survey of paintings and sculptures by artists from the Southeast, who are very much like artists from other regions of the country except that they may eat grits. Through May 4. (Alternative Museum, 17 White St., three blocks south of Canal St., at Sixth Ave. Closed Tuesdays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

EUGÈNE ATGET (1857-1927)—Two shows in tandem, "Ancien Régime" (prints of Versailles, Saint-Cloud, and Sceaux) and "Modern Times" (working-class Paris), complete a survey of the photographer's work on display at the Museum of Modern Art. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

ERWIN BLUMENFELD (1897-1969)—Experimental photographs, primarily. Through May 18. (Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. Opens at noon.)

WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY / JOEL-PETER WITKIN—Photographs documenting Hale County, Alabama, plus three wood sculptures of some of the buildings that appear in the photographs. / Seven new portraits. Through Saturday, April 27. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

LEWIS HINE (1874-1940)—About forty silver prints on child-labor conditions, his best-known work. Through Saturday, April 27. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

VERA LEHNDORFF AND HOLGER TRÜLZSCH—Dye-transfer photographs. Through Saturday, April 20. (Stoler, 13 White St.)

RUTH ORKIN (1921-85) / **EDWARD STEICHEN** (1879-1973)—A memorial show of representative photographs by a photojournalist. / Twelve portraits—of Garbo, Valentino, and other notables—recently printed by George Tice from Steichen's original negatives. Through May 18. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

EVA RUBINSTEIN—Photographs of people and landscapes in Paris, Poland, and Mexico. Through May 4. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

STUDIO RINGL & PIT—Photographs from the commercial studio of Grete Stern and Ellen Auerbach, Bauhaus-era German artists. Through Saturday, April 27. (Goethe House, 1014 Fifth Ave., at 83rd St. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 to 7; Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, noon to 5.)

SAM WAGSTAFF COLLECTION—Mr. Wagstaff selected this show of nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographs that were in his collection before it was bought by the J. Paul Getty Museum, and of a few photographs he recently acquired. Through June 9. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A show of antiquities—crosses, chalices, crowns—from the Treasury of San Marco, Venice, many of which have resided there since their removal from Constantinople in the early thirteenth century. . . . ¶ A retrospective of sixty-three landscape paintings by George Inness. The Metropolitan is the first stop for this travelling exhibition, which was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. . . . ¶ A hundred drawings, from the museum's permanent collection, by seventeenth-century Dutch masters; eighteen are by Rembrandt. All shows through June 9. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—A chronological arrangement of Matisse drawings, about a third of which are being shown in public for the first time. Through May 14. . . . ¶ Henri Rousseau's "Myself, Portrait-Landscape" greets viewers to a retrospective of approximately sixty of the artist's paintings. Through June 4. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Last sections of the Atget survey. Through May 14. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A comprehensive show of works on paper by Helen Frankenthaler, with watercolors, acrylics, charcoal, and crayons among the mediums. Through Sunday, April 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Whitney Biennial, 1985: eighty-four artists, a hundred and forty-six pieces (paintings, sculptures, photographs, films, video, and installations). Through June 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

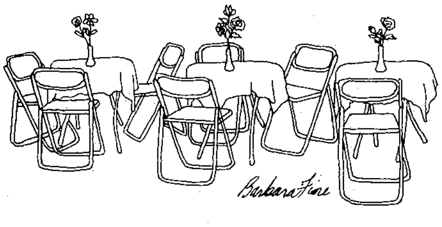
BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—A show of drawings and paintings by nineteenth-century American Pre-Raphaelites, who practiced the doctrines of John Ruskin and the English movement, and whose subjects were nature scenes and humble still-lifes. Also included are works by better-known contemporaneous artists outside of but affected by the movement—Bierstadt, Church, Durand, and others. Through June 10. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A display of skeletal studies done by osteologist S. Harmsted Chubb (a staff member at the museum between 1901 and 1949) which capture their subjects in motion—e.g., a man reaching for the bridle of a rearing horse. Through June 16. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

GROLIER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—A show of more than a hundred books that mirror literary and architectural responses to the Gothic Revival period in England. On view are first editions of such gothic-novel paradigms as "Mysteries of Udolpho" (1794) and "Northanger Abbey" (1818); Horace Walpole's illustrated publication about his Gothic villa, Strawberry Hill; and similar texts. Through June 8. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show of paintings and drawings by German artist Felix Nussbaum (1904-44), many from the period when he lived in hiding during the Second World War. The artist died at Auschwitz. . . . ¶ A series of recent prints by Frank Stella, who based them on a series (also on exhibit) by El Lissitzky (1919), who based *his* prints on the children's Seder song "Had Gadya." Through June 9. (Open daily except Saturdays. Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Fridays, 11 to 3; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—Albrecht Dürer's original drawing "Praying Hands" is the centerpiece of a show of seventy-five Old Master drawings on loan from the Albertina collection in Vienna. As a bonus, the Morgan has added its own eight Dürers. Through May 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)



NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—The bicentennial of Audubon's birth is cause for celebration at the society, which owns, and will mount, all four hundred and thirty-three remaining original watercolors for "Birds of America." Starts Thursday, April 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM, 144 W. 125th St.—A large show called "Images of a Turbulent Decade, 1963-1973," which presents works in diverse mediums, primarily by black but also by anti-war and feminist artists, among them Benny Andrews, Rudolf Barnik, Romare Bearden, David Hammons, Gordon Parks, Betye Saar, and May Stevens. Also, a number of documentary photographs of civil-rights leaders and marchers. Through June 30. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

A.I.R. GALLERY, 63 Crosby St. 966-0799.—Short films in a series called "Artists as Filmmakers." Thursday through Saturday, April 18-20, at 8. . . . ¶ "As It Stands," programs of performance art: Jerri Allyn, Thursday, April 25; Joe Lowery, Friday, April 26; Jerri Allyn, Bill Gordh, Joe Lowery, and Debra Wanner, Saturday, April 27—each night at 8.

THE KITCHEN, 59 Wooster St. 925-3615.—Augustus Pablo (music), Thursday, April 18, and Friday, April 19, at 8:30; Elizabeth Streb (dance), Thursday through Sunday, April 25-28, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.—Ginette Laurin and company (dance), Friday through Sunday, April 19-21, at 9; individual works by four choreographers—Ann Carlson, Diane Martel, Susan Seizer, and, on film, Lucy Hemmendinger, Friday through Sunday, April 26-28, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

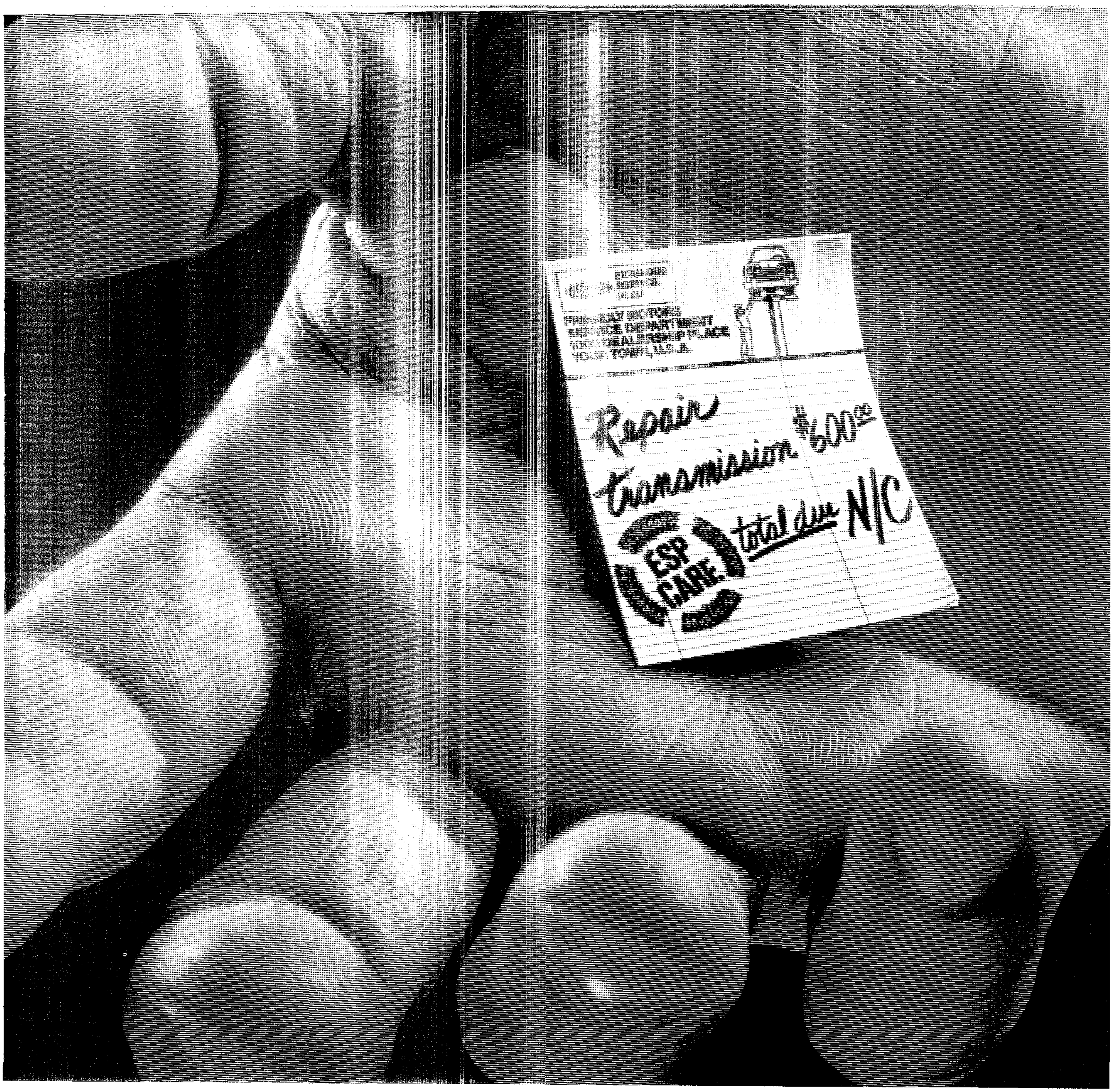
METROPOLITAN OPERA—Final performances of the season—Wednesday, April 17, at 7: "Parsifal," with Leonie Rysanek, Jon Vickers, Simon Estes, and Kurt Moll; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, April 18, at 8: "Tosca," with Hildegard Behrens, Plácido Domingo, and Cornell MacNeil; Giuseppe Sinopoli. . . . ¶ Friday, April 19, at 8: "Lulu," with Julia Migenes-Johnson, Evelyn Lear, Kenneth Riegel, and Franz Mazura; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 20, at 12:30: "Parsifal," with Leonie Rysanek, Jon Vickers, Simon Estes, and Kurt Moll; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 20, at 8: "Rigoletto," with Judith Blegen, Isola Jones, Dano Raffanti, and Louis Quilico; Nello Santi.

OPERA SHOP OF THE VINEYARD THEATRE—Performances of Scarlatti's "La Griselda," conducted by James Kurtz and staged by Joseph LoSchiavo. (309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. Fridays through Sundays, April 19-21 and 26-28, at 7:30.)

NEW YORK LYRIC OPERA COMPANY—Christopher Keene conducting a performance of Frank Martin's "Le Vin Herbé." Staged by Nicholas Deutsch. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Friday, April 19, at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the performance.)

AMATO OPERA COMPANY—Presenting Verdi's "Alzira," as well as performances in English (by the same cast) of Voltaire's play "Alzire," upon which the opera is based. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturdays at 7:30 and Sundays at 2:30.)

"GIMPEL THE FOOL"—An opera by David Schiff,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based on a short story by Isaac Bashevis Singer, in its English-language première. Conducted by Amy Kaiser and staged by Dan Held. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, April 20, at 8:30, and Sunday, April 21, at 2:30.)

Juilliard American Opera Center—Benefit performances of Handel's "Xerxes" (in English). Staged by Norman Ayrton, with the Juilliard Chamber Orchestra conducted by Albert Fuller. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Wednesday, April 24, and Friday, April 26, at 8, and Sunday, April 28, at 3. For information about tickets, call 874-7515, Mondays through Fridays, from 9:30 to 5:30.)

Bel Canto Opera—Victoria Bond conducting the first two of four performances of Alberto Franchetti's "Germania," staged by Maroun Azouri. (Joan of Arc Junior High School, 154 W. 93rd St. Saturday, April 27, at 8, and Sunday, April 28, at 2:30. Tickets at the door on the days of the performances.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Raymond Leppard conducting an all-Handel program Thursday through Saturday, April 18-20, and Tuesday, April 23, at 8 (all with Cynthia Clarey, mezzo-soprano, and Carol Webb, violin). . . . ¶ Zubin Mehta conducting a varied program on Thursday, April 25, at 8; Friday, April 26, at 2; and Saturday, April 27, at 8 (all with Ida Haendel, violin).

Detroit Symphony Orchestra—Gunther Herbig conducting a Tchaikovsky-Mahler program, with Antonio Meneses, cello. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, April 19, at 8.)

Netherlands Chamber Orchestra—Antoni Ros-Marba conducting, with Christopher Parkening, classical guitarist. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, April 21, at 3.)

Mainz Chamber Orchestra—Gunter Kehr conducting, with Nina Tichman, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 24, at 8.)

Mannes College Orchestra—Yakov Kreizberg conducting, with Carol Archer, piano. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. Thursday, April 18, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Manhattan Philharmonia Orchestra—Patrick Flynn conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Friday, April 19, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Newband—Dean Drummond conducting. (Theatre of the Open Eye, 316 E. 88th St. Saturday and Sunday, April 20-21, at 8. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Peter Maag conducting a Mozart-Britten-Brahms program, with John Aler, tenor. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 21, at 3.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, April 21, at 3, a Bach-Handel program, with Simon Preston, organ. . . . ¶ Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, April 27, at 8, and Sunday, April 28, at 3, a varied program, with Jaime Laredo, violin, and Clamma Dale, soprano.)

New York Pops—Skitch Henderson conducting a benefit concert, with Doc Severinsen, trumpet, and Liz Smith, narrator. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, April 22, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting the fourth in a "Meet the Moderns" series of five programs, this one entitled "Narratives." With Kimball Wheeler and Isabelle Ganz, mezzo-sopranos; Robert Dick, bass flute; Robert Sherman, narrator; and others. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Thursday, April 25, at 8. . . . ¶ Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, April 26, at 8. For information about tickets, call 254-6374.)

Mozartean Players Classical Period Orchestra—Steven Lubin conducting and playing the fortepiano, in an all-Mozart program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, April 25, at 8.)

Ensemble for Early Music's Grande Bande—A program of thirteenth-century music and dance. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, April 27, at 8.)

Collegiate Chorale—Robert Bass directing a performance of Verdi's "Requiem," with Martina Arroyo, soprano; Lorna Myers, mezzo-soprano; Vinson Cole, tenor; and Paul Plishka, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, April 20, at 8.)

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Canby Singers—Edward Tatnall Canby directing a program of a-cappella music. (St. John's Episcopal Church, 218 W. 11th St., at Waverly Pl. Saturday, April 20, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Musica Sacra—Richard Westenburg directing the chorus and orchestra in a Mozart-Haydn program, with Judith Blegen, soprano; Shirley Love, mezzo-soprano; Frank Lopardo, tenor; and Malcolm Smith, bass. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, April 26, at 7:30.)

RECITALS

Rita Bouboulidi—The first two in a series of seven concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle of piano sonatas. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Wednesdays, April 17 and 24, at 8. For information about tickets, call 242-4770.)

Pierre Morin—Classical guitarist. (CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th St. Wednesday, April 17, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Peter Serkin—The second of two recitals of Beethoven piano sonatas. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, April 18, at 8.)

Waverly Consort—A program of vocal and instrumental music by Handel, Bach, and Schütz. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, April 18, and Saturday, April 20, at 8.)

Music from Marlboro—Two performances of the same program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, April 19, at 8. . . . ¶ Alice Tully Hall. Monday, April 22, at 8, the last in a series of concerts.)

Sylvan Wind Quintet—A program of music by Mozart, Ravel, and Brahms. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, April 19, at 8.)

Paula Robison—Flute, in the last in a series of concerts, this one with Eliot Fisk, classical guitarist. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, April 20, at 8.)

Janet Sullivan—Soprano, in the first of two performances of a program of poems set to music. (St. Michael's Church Recital Hall, 225 W. 99th St. Saturday, April 20, at 8. For information about tickets, call 222-2700.)

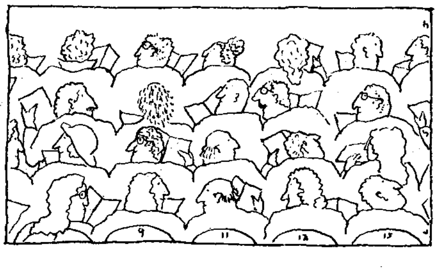
St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—An all-Schubert program, with Catherine Malfitano, soprano, and Artur Balsam, piano. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Saturday, April 20, at 8.)

Carol Skarimbas and Martin Katz—Soprano and piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, April 20, at 8:30.)

Orpheus—Chamber music. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, April 21, at 2.)

Music Before 1800—The last in a series of concerts, this one performed by London Baroque, a group making its first appearance here. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. Sunday, April 21, at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Si-Yo Music Society—Chamber music. (Schimmel Center for the Arts, Pace University, Spruce St., between Nassau and Gold Sts. 488-1715. Sunday, April 21, at 3.)



All-Busoni Concert—Performed by Richard Goode and Ruth Laredo, piano; Paula Robison, flute; and others. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Sunday, April 21, at 7.)

Nina Lelchuk—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 21, at 8.)

Frans Brueggen and John Gibbons—Transverse flute/recorder and harpsichord, in an all-Bach program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Sunday, April 21, at 8.)

Arioso Trio—Chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, April 21, at 8.)

Composers' Forum—A program of music by Vincent McDermott, Otto Laske, Nancy Van de Vate, and others. With Marilyn De Boyd DeReggi, soprano. (The Kitchen, 59 Wooster St. Sunday, April 21, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Karl Kraber and Danielle Martin—Flute and piano. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Monday, April 22, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Bach Chamber Soloists—A program of instrumental music. (St. Michael's Church Recital Hall, 225 W. 99th St. Monday, April 22, at 8. For information about tickets, call 222-2700.)

David Taylor—Bass trombone, with assisting artists. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Tuesday, April 23, at 2.)

Alfred Brendel—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, April 23, at 8.)

Margaret Newman—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Tuesday, April 23, at 8.)

Aulos Ensemble—The first in a series of three programs of baroque music performed on original instruments. With Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano. (Rutgers Presbyterian Church, 236 W. 73rd St. Tuesday, April 23, at 8. For information about tickets, call 663-7565.)

Raphael Trio—The last in a series of Mozart-Schumann-Fauré programs, this one with Michael Tree, viola. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday and Wednesday, April 23–24, at 8.)

Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players—A program of music by Charles Wuorinen, Edgard Varèse, Darius Milhaud, and others. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Tuesday, April 23, at 8.)

Eliot Fisk—Classical guitarist. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Wednesday, April 24, at 8.)

Walter Ponce—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, April 24, at 8.)

Hildegard Behrens—Soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, April 25, at 8.)

Michala Petri—Recorder. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, April 25, at 8.)

Andrew Violette—Piano, performing premières of two of his own works. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, April 25, at 8.)

"Echoes of the Shining Prince"—The première of this one-act concert opera by Seth Cooper, plus works by Richard Rodney Bennett, Debussy, Kengyo Yatsuhashi, and Mr. Cooper. With Donna Wade, soprano; Fusako Yoshida, koto; William Moersch, marimba; and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Thursday, April 25, at 8.)

Robert Thompson—Bassoon, with assisting artists, in a one-hour program. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, April 26, at 6. For information about tickets, call 741-5689.)

Murray Perahia—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, April 26, at 8.)

Menahem Pressler and the Emerson String Quartet—The last in a series of programs for piano and string quartet. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, April 26, at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Jorge Bolet, piano; Kenneth Cooper, harpsichord; Robert Routch, horn; and members of the Society. (Alice Tully Hall. Friday, April 26, at 8, and Sunday, April 28, at 5.)

Samuel Rhodes—Viola, in the last in a series of all-Hindemith concerts, this one with Lucy

Shelton, soprano; Hiroko Yajima, violin; Joel Krosnick, cello; and Henry Schuman, oboe. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Saturday, April 27, at 2.)

JEFFREY SWANN—Piano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, April 27, at 8. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

DANIELLE WOERNER—Soprano. (St. Michael's Church Recital Hall, 225 W. 99th St. Saturday, April 27, at 8. For information about tickets, call 222-2700.)

CHAMBER MUSIC AT BAM—Leon Kirchner conducting an ensemble and playing the piano, with Beverly Hoch, soprano, and Paula Robison, flute. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, April 27, at 8:30, and Sunday, April 28, at 2.)

SPORTS

BASEBALL—YANKEES at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Chicago, Thursday, April 18, at 1. . . . ¶ Cleveland, Friday, April 19, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, April 20-21, at 2. . . . ¶ Boston, Tuesday through Thursday, April 23-25, at 8. . . . **METS** at Shea Stadium: Vs. Pittsburgh, Friday, April 26, at 8:05, and Saturday, April 27, at 1:35.

CREW—Compton Cup Regatta: Harvard, M.I.T., and Princeton. (Cambridge. Saturday, April 20.) . . . ¶ Goes Trophy Regatta: Cornell, Navy, and Syracuse. (Annapolis. Saturday, April 20.) . . . ¶ Blackwell Cup Regatta: Columbia, Pennsylvania, and Yale. (Harlem River. Saturday, April 20.) . . . ¶ Adams Cup Regatta: Harvard, Navy, and Pennsylvania. (Annapolis. Saturday, April 27.) . . . ¶ Carnegie Cup Regatta: Cornell and Princeton. (Princeton. Saturday, April 27.)

RACING—At **AQUEDUCT**: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, May 6. The Wood Memorial Invitational, Saturday, April 20, and the Top Flight Handicap, Sunday, April 21. . . . **GARDEN STATE PARK**, Cherry Hill, N.J.: Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, June 15. The Garden State, Saturday, April 20, and the Trenton Handicap, Saturday, April 27.

RUNNING—The Trevira Ten-Mile Twosome will start at ten-thirty on Saturday, April 27, in Central Park near the Tavern on the Green, and finish back at the same place.

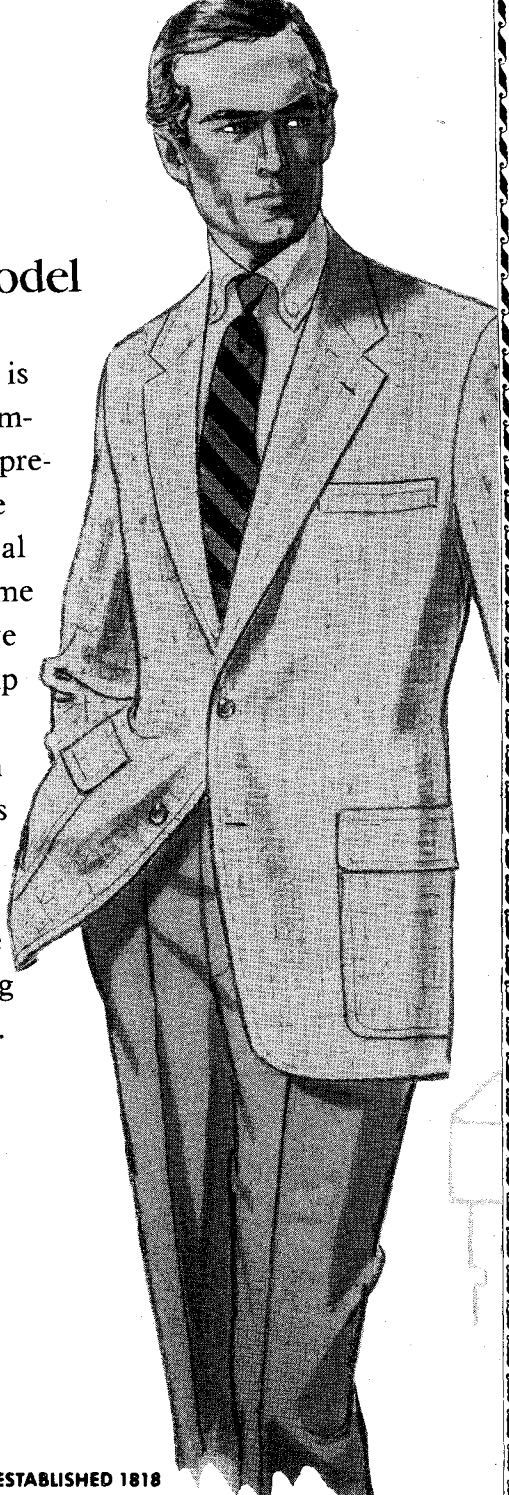
SQUASH RACQUETS—Drakkar North American Open—Tournament matches, Friday, April 26, at noon and 6. . . . ¶ Quarterfinals, Saturday, April 27, at 10. . . . ¶ Semifinals, Saturday, April 27, at 6. . . . ¶ Finals, Sunday, April 28, at 2:30. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

TRACK—Penn Relays. (Philadelphia. Thursday through Saturday, April 25-27.)

ET ALIA

POETRY AND PROSE READINGS—Eudora Welty reading from her own short stories. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, April 22, at 8.) . . . ¶ David Bottoms, William Harmon, Cleopatra Mathis, Robert Morgan, and Charles Wright reading from their own poetry. (Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. Tuesday, April 23, at 7. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Lois Smith, Estelle Parsons, Morgan Freeman, and Freda Kavanagh reading from the short stories of James Joyce, Flannery O'Connor, William Melvin Kelly, and Harold Brodkey. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesday, April 24, at 6:30.) . . . ¶ Jamaica Kincaid reading from her own prose. (Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. Thursday, April 25, at 8. No tickets necessary; seating on a first-come, first-served basis.)

AUCTIONS—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5; Sunday, April 21, from 1 to 5.)—Wednesday, April 17, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese works of art, paintings, and furniture. . . . ¶ Monday, April 22, at 10:15 and 2, and Tuesday, April 23, at 2: Jewelry. . . . ¶ Tuesday, April 23, following the above sale: Jewelry, from the collection of the late Annie-Laurie Aitken. . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 24, at 2: Books and manuscripts, from the library of the late Paul Francis Webster. Exhibition starts Thursday, April 18. . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 24, at 7, and Thursday, April 25, at 10:15: Paintings and drawings, from the estate of Florence J. Gould. Exhibition starts Thursday, April 18. Admission to the sales by ticket only; for information, call 606-7303.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through April 18: The final programs of a week-long series of thirty-seven video, film, and television documentaries.
From April 19: "French Cancan" (†).

R.K.O. Century Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
Through April 18: "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (directed by Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.
From April 19: "Lost in America" (†).

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through April 18: "Birdy" (Alan Parker), with Matthew Modine and Nicolas Cage; and "The Natural" (Barry Levinson), with Robert Redford, Robert Duvall, and Glenn Close.
From April 19: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1600)
"The Breakfast Club" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through April 18: "Fraternity Vacation" (James Frawley).
From April 19: "Alamo Bay" (Louis Malle), with Ed Harris and Amy Madigan.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Cat's Eye" (Lewis Teague), with Drew Barrymore and James Woods.
Theatre 2: "Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mask" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Cher, Eric Stoltz, and Sam Elliott.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Beverly Hills Cop" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Amadeus" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Ladyhawke" (Richard Donner), with Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through April 18: "Porky's Revenge" (James Komack), with Dan Monahan.
From April 19: "Moving Violations" (Neal Israel).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through April 18: "The Sure Thing" (Rob Reiner), with John Cusack.
From April 19: "Petit Con" (Gérard Lauzier; in French).

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through April 18: "Fraternity Vacation" (James Frawley). From April 19: "Lost in America" (†).
Theatre 2: "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through April 18: "The Slugger's Wife" (Hal Ashby), with Michael O'Keefe and Rebecca De Mornay. From April 19: "Lily in Love" (Karoly Makk), with Christopher Plummer and Maggie Smith.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "King David" (Bruce Beresford), with Richard Gere. From April 26: "1918" (Ken Harrison).

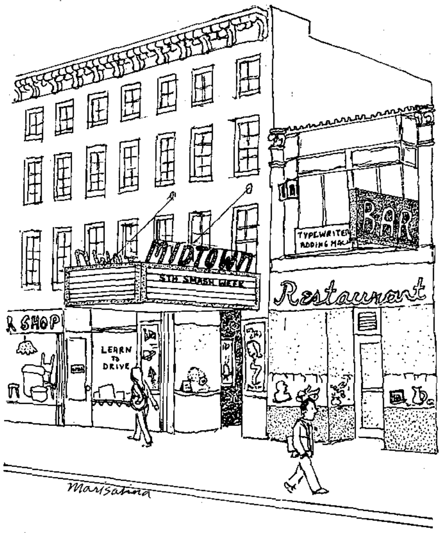
D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Beverly Hills Cop" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "A Test of Love" (Gil Brealey; an Australian film).
Theatre 2: Through April 18: "Lost in America" (†). From April 19: "My First Wife" (Paul Cox; an Australian film), with Wendy Hughes and John Hargreaves.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 18: "Places in the Heart" (†). From April 19: "The Company of Wolves" (Neal Jordan), with Angela Lansbury and David Warner.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†).

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Alamo Bay" (Louis Malle), with Ed Harris and Amy Madigan.
Theatre 2: "Mask" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Cher, Eric Stoltz, and Sam Elliott.



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 24.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Witness" (†).

U. A. 85th St. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Cat's Eye" (Lewis Teague), with Drew Barrymore and James Woods.
Theatre 2: "Nine Deaths of the Ninja" (Emmett Alston), with Sho Kosugi.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Ladyhawke" (Richard Donner), with Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.
Theatre 2: "The Last Dragon" (Michael Schultz).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through April 23: "Enormous Changes at the Last Minute" (1983; directed by Ellen Hovde and Mirra Bank). From April 24: "When the Raven Flies" (1984; Hrafn Gunnlaugsson; in Icelandic).
Theatre 2: "The Illusionist."

Vandam, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Times of Harvey Milk" (Robert Epstein), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Last Dragon" (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 2: Through April 18: "Blood Simple" (†). From April 19: "What Have I Done to Deserve This?" (Pedro Almodovar; in Spanish).

Greenwich Playhouse 1 and 2, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Killing Fields" (†).
Theatre 2: "Return of the Jedi" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through April 18: "Wildrose" (John Hanson), with Lisa Eichhorn. From April 19: "The Company of Wolves" (Neil Jordan), with Angela Lansbury and David Warner.
Theatre 2: Through April 25: "The Makioka Sisters" (†). From April 26: "Where's Picone?" (Nanni Loy; in Italian), with Giancarlo Giannini.
Theatre 3: "Camila" (Maria Luisa Bemberg; an Argentine film, in Spanish).
Theatre 4: "Stranger Than Paradise" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "A Passage to India" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 18: "The Care Bears Movie" (Arna Selznick), an animated film. From April 19: "Alamo Bay" (Louis Malle), with Ed Harris and Amy Madigan.
Theatre 3: "Amadeus" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Places in the Heart" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"King David" (Bruce Beresford), with Richard Gere.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"A Passage to India" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Heartbreakers" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"A Private Function" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Killing Fields" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Camila" (Maria Luisa Bemberg; an Argentine film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Amadeus" (†).
Theatre 3: Through April 18: "The 400 Blows" (†). From April 19: "Jules and Jim" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†).
Theatre 2: "Streetwise" (Martin Bell), a documentary.

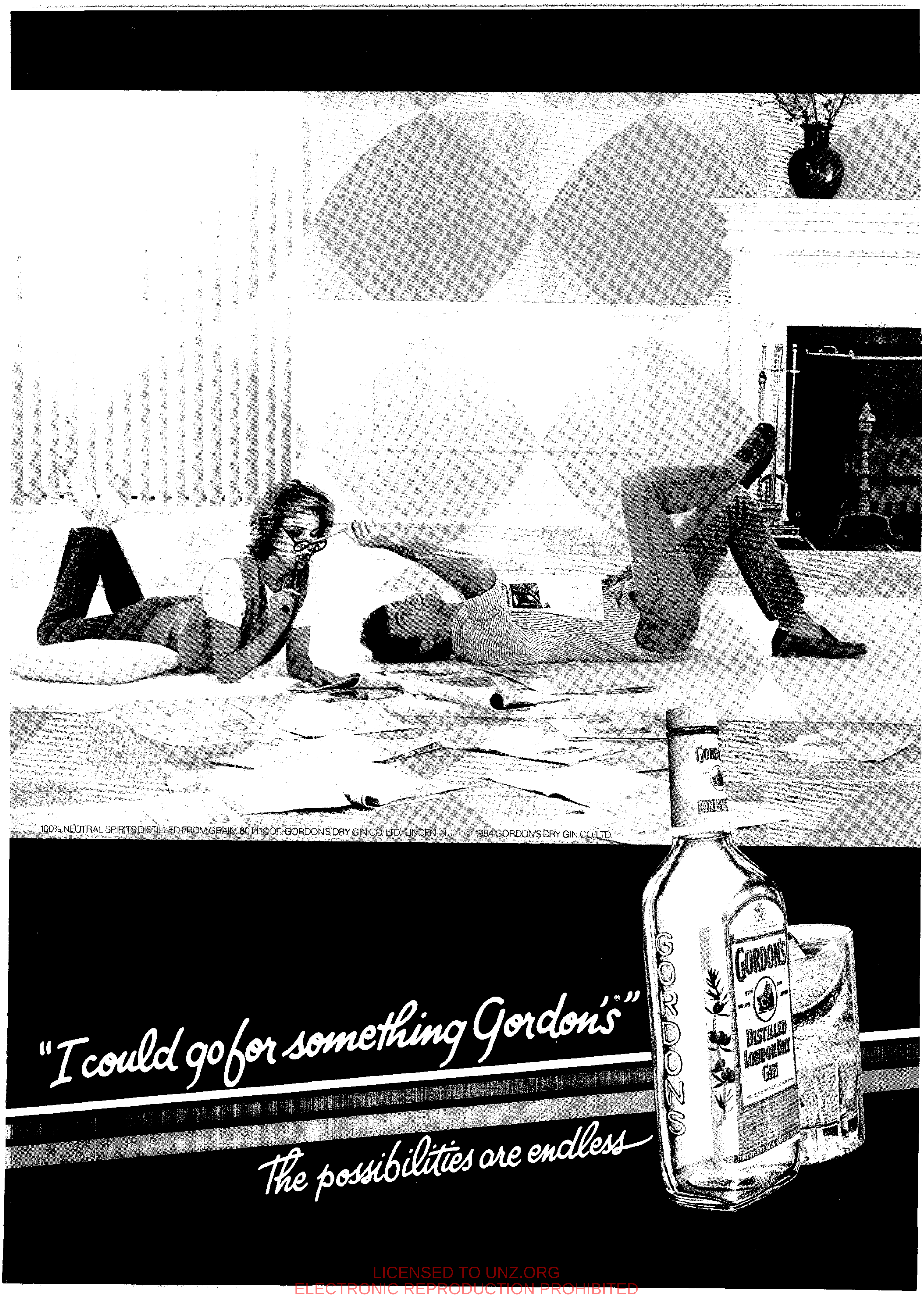
Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "My New Partner" (Claude Zidi; in French), with Philippe Noiret.
Theatre 2: "The Brother from Another Planet" (John Sayles), with Joe Morton, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Sayles.

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.
Theatre 2: "Cat's Eye" (Lewis Teague), with Drew Barrymore and James Woods.
Theatre 3: Through April 18: "The Breakfast Club" (†). From April 19: "Moving Violations" (Neal Israel).
Theatre 4: "The Last Dragon" (Michael Schultz).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Lost in America" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mask" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Cher, Eric Stoltz, and Sam Elliott.
Theatre 3: "Ladyhawke" (Richard Donner), with Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, and Michelle Pfeiffer.
Theatre 4: Through April 18: "Return of the Jedi" (†). From April 19: "Alamo Bay" (Louis Malle), with Ed Harris and Amy Madigan.
Theatre 5: "Witness" (†).
Theatre 6: "Desperately Seeking Susan" (†).

New Yorker 1 and 2, B'way at 88th. (580-7900)
Theatre 1: "A Passage to India" (†).
Theatre 2: "Blood Simple" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through April 18: "Nine Deaths of the Ninja" (Emmett Alston), with Sho Kosugi. From April 19: "The Sure Thing" (Rob Reiner), with John Cusack.
Theatre 2: "Cat's Eye" (Lewis Teague), with Drew Barrymore and James Woods.
Theatre 3: "The Last Dragon" (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 4: Through April 18: "Fraternity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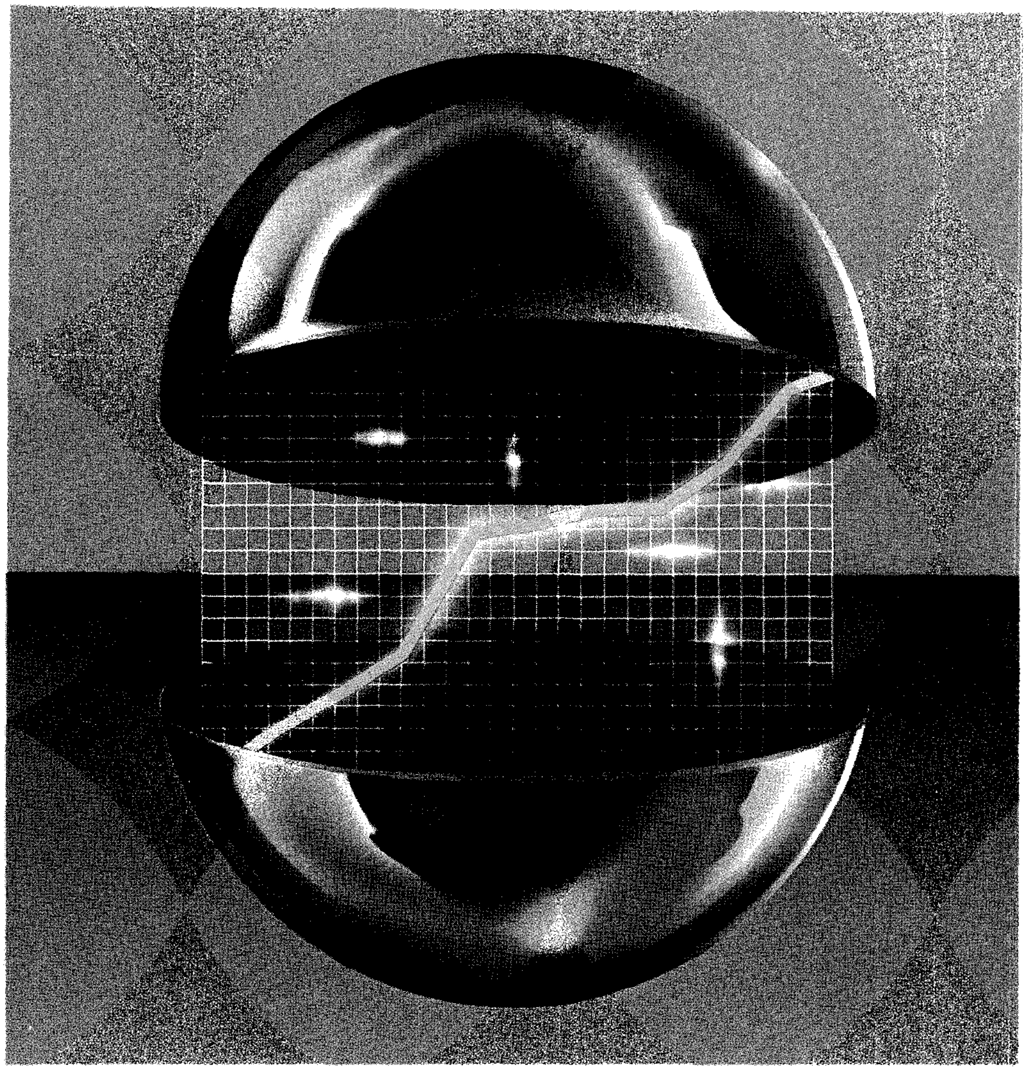

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Vacation" (James Frawley). From April 19: "The Company of Wolves" (Neil Jordan), with Angela Lansbury and David Warner.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (directed by Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.

Theatre 2: Through April 18: "Porky's Revenge" (James Komack), with Dan Monahan. From April 19: "Moving Violations" (Neal Israel).

Theatre 3: Through April 18: "Streetlove." From April 19: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Breakfast Club" (†).

Theatre 5: "Into the Night" (John Landis), with Jeff Goldblum and Michelle Pfeiffer.

Theatre 6: "The Falcon and the Snowman" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

"The Care Bears Movie" (Arna Selznick), an animated film.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Fraternity Vacation" (James Frawley).

Theatre 3: "Friday the 13th: A New Beginning" (Danny Steinmann).

Theatre 4: "Beverly Hills Cop" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"Witness" (†).

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Mask" (Peter Bogdanovich), with Cher, Eric Stoltz, and Sam Elliott.

Theatre 2: "Cat's Eye" (Lewis Teague), with Drew Barrymore and James Woods.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

Through April 18: "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (†).

From April 19: "Porky's Revenge" (James Komack), with Dan Monahan.

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"Pinocchio" (1940), a Walt Disney full-length cartoon.

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "The Killing Fields" (†).

Theatre 2: "Ladyhawke" (Richard Donner), with Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, and Michelle Pfeiffer.

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: "Return of the Jedi" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Last Dragon" (Michael Schultz).

U. A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: Through April 18: "Amadeus" (†). From April 19: To be announced.

Theatre 2: Through April 18: "Nine Deaths of the Ninja" (Emmett Alston), with Sho Kosugi. From April 19: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Agee Room, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

"Hotel New York" (1985; directed by Jackie Raynal).

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through April 18: "Real Life" (1979; Albert Brooks), with Brooks and Charles Grodin; and "This Is Spinal Tap" (1984; Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest.

From April 19: To be announced.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

Through April 18: To be announced.

April 19-25: A week-long program of Greek films.

From April 26: To be announced.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through April 18: "Bringing Up Baby" (1938; Howard Hawks), with Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, and Charles Ruggles; and "Stage Door" (1937; Gregory La Cava), with Ginger Rogers, Katharine Hepburn, Adolphe Menjou, and Franklin Pangborn.

April 19-20: "Rope" (1948; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, John Dall, and Farley Granger; and "The Trouble with Harry" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Edmund Gwenn, John Forsythe, and Shirley MacLaine.

April 21-23: "Blow-Up" (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings; and "The Passenger" (1975; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider.

April 24-25: "Last Tango in Paris" (†); and "A Man and a Woman" (1966; Claude Lelouch; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Jean-Louis Trintignant.

April 26-27: "Life of Brian" (1979; Terry Jones), with Graham Chapman; and "And Now for Something Completely Different" (1972), selected skits from the BBC-TV series "Monty Python's Flying Circus."

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

"Stop Making Sense" (1984; Jonathan Demme), with the Talking Heads.

Hollywood Twin Cinema 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

April 17: "This Is Spinal Tap" (1984; Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest; and "Hard to Hold" (1984; Larry Peerce), with Rick Springfield.

April 18-20: "Horse Feathers" (1932; Norman McLeod), "Animal Crackers" (1930; Victor Heerman), and "Duck Soup" (1933; Leo McCarey), all with the Marx Brothers.

April 21-22: "Under the Volcano" (1984; John Huston), with Albert Finney, Jacqueline Bisset, and Anthony Andrews; and "Wise Blood" (1980; John Huston), with Brad Dourif, Ned Beatty, Harry Dean Stanton, and Amy Wright.

April 23-24: "Entre Nous" (1984; Diane Kurys; in French), with Isabelle Huppert and Miou-Miou; and "Le Bal" (1984; Ettore Scola).

April 25-27: "Caligula" (1980), with Malcolm McDowell.

Hollywood Twin Cinema 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

Through April 18: "Anna Christie" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, and Marie Dressler; and "Anna Karenina" (1935; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Fredric March, and Basil Rathbone.

April 19-20: "Falling in Love" (1984; Ulu Grosbard), with Robert De Niro and Meryl Streep; and "The River" (1984; Mark Rydell), with Mel Gibson, Sissy Spacek, and Scott Glenn.

April 21: "Prince of the City" (1981; Sidney Lumet), with Treat Williams, Lindsay Crouse, and Jerry Orbach; and "Serpico" (1973; Sidney Lumet), with Al Pacino.

April 22-23: "A Hard Day's Night" (1964; Richard Lester) and "Let It Be" (1970; Michael Lindsay-Hogg), both with the Beatles.

April 24-25: "The Warriors" (†); and "Enter the Dragon" (1973; Robert Clouse), with Bruce Lee and John Saxon.

April 26-27: "Mrs. Soffel" (1984; Gillian Armstrong), with Diane Keaton, Mel Gibson, and Matthew Modine; and "Mass Appeal" (1984; Glenn Jordan), with Jack Lemmon, Zeljko Ivanek, and Charles Durning.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

April 17: "The Family Game" (1984; Yoshimitsu Morita; in Japanese); and "The Sun's Burial" (1960; Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese).

April 18: "Children of Paradise" (1945; Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, and Maria Casarès.

April 19: "Metropolis" (1926; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm; and "Alphaville" (1965; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Eddie Constantine, Anna Karina, and Akim Tamiroff.

April 20: "Once Upon a Time in America" (1984; Sergio Leone), with Robert De Niro and James Woods.

April 21: "Shall We Dance" (1937; Mark Sandrich), with Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire, Edward Everett Horton, Jerome Cowan, and Eric Blore; and "Top Hat" (1935; Mark Sandrich), with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire.

April 22: "Mr. Arkadin" (†); and "The Trial" (1963; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, and Welles.

April 23: "Winter Kills" (1979; William Richert), with Jeff Bridges, John Huston, and Anthony Perkins; and "Cutter's Way" (†).

April 24: "Ohayo" (†); and "Tokyo Story" (1953; Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese).

April 25: "Bizarre, Bizarre" (†); and "The Lower Depths" (1936; Jean Renoir; in French), with Jean Gabin and Louis Jouvet.

From April 26: "Tokyo" (1985; Wim Wenders); and "Chambre 666" (1982; Wim Wenders).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Through April 20: "Dial M for Murder" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, Robert Cummings, Anthony Dawson, and John Williams; and "Strangers on a Train" (1951; Alfred Hitchcock), with Farley Granger, Robert Walker, and Ruth Roman.

April 21-23: "The Lady Vanishes" (1938 †); and "Rebecca" (1940; Alfred Hitchcock), with Joan Fontaine, Laurence Olivier, Judith Anderson, George Sanders, and Florence Bates.

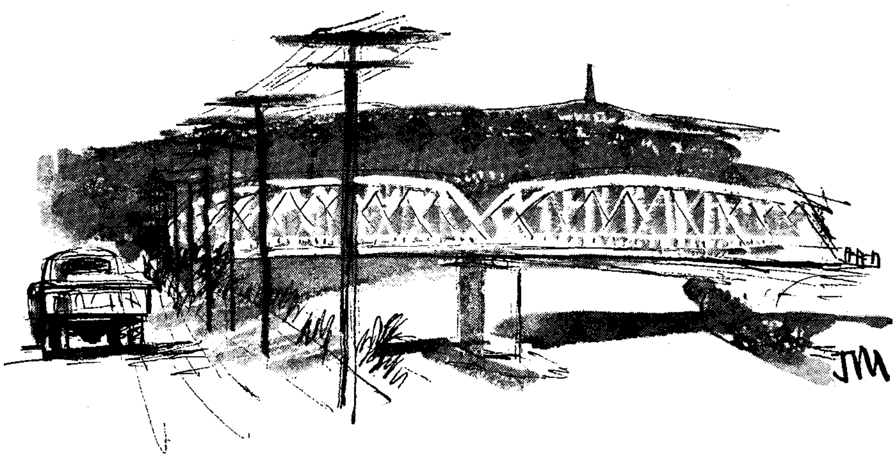
April 24-27: "The 39 Steps" (1935 †); and "North by Northwest" (1959; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, and Martin Landau.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

April 17: "Zatoichi Meets Yojimbo" (1971; Kihachi Okamoto; in Japanese); and "Kill!" (1968; Kihachi Okamoto; in Japanese).

April 18: "Arruza" (1972; Budd Boetticher), a documentary; and three Carroll Ballard short films.

April 19-20: "Alice in Wonderland" (1951), a



film with a cast of puppets, along with a few genuine actors, including Carol Marsh, Pamela Brown, and Felix Aylmer; and "Animal Farm" (1954), an animated cartoon.

April 21: "Kagemusha" ("The Shadow Warrior;" 1980; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai.

April 22: "Gilda" (†); and "Fire Down Below" (1957; Robert Parrish), with Rita Hayworth, Robert Mitchum, and Jack Lemmon.

April 23: "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife" (1938; Ernst Lubitsch), with Claudette Colbert, Gary Cooper, David Niven, and Herman Bing; and "That Uncertain Feeling" (1941; Ernst Lubitsch), with Merle Oberon, Melvyn Douglas, and Burgess Meredith.

April 24: "The Last Picture Show" (†); and "Hud" (1963; Martin Ritt), with Paul Newman, Melvyn Douglas, Patricia Neal, and Brandon deWilde.

April 25: "The Golden Age of Second Avenue" (1969), a documentary; and "The Golem" (1920; a silent film).

April 26: "Eating Raoul" (1982; Paul Bartel), with Bartel, Mary Woronov, and Richard Beltran; and "The Little Shop of Horrors" (†).

April 27: "Gallipoli" (1981; Peter Weir; an Australian film), with Mel Gibson, Mark Lee, and Bill Kerr; and "Walkabout" (1971; Nicolas Roeg; an Australian film).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

April 17: "The Mask of Fu Manchu" (1932; Charles Brabin and Charles Vidor), with Boris Karloff and Lewis Stone; and "Mr. Moto Takes a Vacation" (1939; Norman Foster), with Peter Lorre.

April 18: "On the Avenue" (1937; Roy Del Ruth), with Madeleine Carroll, Alice Faye, and Dick Powell; and "Born to Dance" (1936; Roy Del Ruth), with Eleanor Powell, James Stewart, and Buddy Ebsen.

April 19-20: "Dark Passage" (1947; Delmer Daves), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead; and "To Have and Have Not" (1944; Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan.

April 21: "1900" (1977; Bernardo Bertolucci), with Robert De Niro, Burt Lancaster, Donald Sutherland, Dominique Sanda, Sterling Hayden, and Gérard Depardieu.

April 22: "Mon Oncle" (1958) and "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953), both films in French, directed by, and with, Jacques Tati.

April 23: "Romance" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Inspiration" (1931; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Robert Montgomery.

April 24: "Down Argentine Way" (1940; Irving Cummings), with Betty Grable, Don Ameche, Charlotte Greenwood, and Carmen Miranda; and "The Gang's All Here" (†).

April 25: "I Wake Up Screaming" (1942; H. Bruce Humberstone), with Betty Grable and Victor Mature; and "Boomerang!" (†).

April 26-27: "The Trial" (1963; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, and Welles; and "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: April 18 at 2:30 and 6: "Potemkin" (1925; directed by Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film, with English intertitles). . . . ¶ April 19 at 2:30: "Family" (1957; Chen Xihe and Ye Ming; in Chinese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 19 at 6 and April 20 at 2: "Under the Bridge" (1983; Bai Chen; in Chinese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 20 at 5: "Family." . . . ¶ April 21 at 2: "In-Laws" (1983; Zhao Huanzhang; in Chinese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 21 at 5: "Regret for the Past" (1981; Shui Hua; in Chinese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 22 at 2:30: "Adventures of a Wanderer" (1984; Yu Bencheng; in Chinese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 22 at 6: "In-Laws." . . . ¶ April 23 at 2:30: "Regret for the Past." . . . ¶ April 23 at 6: "Adventures of a Wanderer." . . . ¶ April 25 at 2:30 and 6: "Variety" (1925; E. A. Dupont; a German silent film, with English intertitles), with Emil Jannings and Lya de Putti. . . . ¶ April 26 at 2:30 and April 27 at 2: "The Young Mr. Pitt" (1942; Carol Reed), with Robert Donat, Robert Morley, Phyllis Calvert, and John Mills. . . . ¶ April 27 at 5: "The Way Ahead" (1944; Carol Reed), with David Niven, Stanley Holloway, Raymond Huntley, Peter Ustinov, Leo Genn, and Trevor Howard.

THEATRE 2: April 18 at 3 and 6:30: "Joint Custody: A New Kind of Family" (1983; Josephine Hayes Dean), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 20 at 2:30 and 5:30: "America, America" (1963; Elia Kazan), with Stathis Giallelis. . . . ¶ April 21 at 2:30 and 5:30: "Farewell to Youth" (1940; Ferdinando Poggioli; in Italian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 22 at 3 and 6:30: "Les Amants" (1958; Louis Malle; in French, with English subtitles), with Jeanne Moreau and Alain Cuny. . . . ¶ April 23 at 3 and 6:30: A program of short films from the museum's archives. . . . ¶ April 25 at 3 and 6:30: "The Great Weirton Steal" (1984; Catherine Pozzo di Borgo), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 26 at 3: "The Burning Earth" (1922; F. W. Murnau; a German silent film, with German intertitles), with Werner Krauss. . . . ¶ April 26 at 6:30 and April 27 at 2:30: "Nosferatu" (1922; F. W. Murnau; a German silent film, with German intertitles), with Max Schreck. . . . ¶ April 27 at 5:30: "The Burning Earth."

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A series of programs composed of films and video works made during the past two years. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Amadeus—The lofty playwright Peter Shaffer has the minor composer Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) declaring war on Heaven for gypping him, and determined to ruin the incomparable Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Tom Hulce) because God's voice is speaking through him. The director, Miloš Forman, trudges through the movie as if every step were a major contribution to art, and he keeps the audience hooked. Some redeeming qualities: Mozart's music, Twyla Tharp's staging of the dances and opera excerpts, and Abraham's eager, slimy Salieri. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/29/84.) (Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Lincoln Plaza. . . . ¶ U. A. Twin; through April 18.)

Beverly Hills Cop—The plot is just a peg for little set pieces in which the street-smart Eddie Murphy, in his worn-out sweatshirts, saunters through swank Beverly Hills locations, tells whopping lies, and outsmarts the white dumbos. Hotfooting the picture to keep it going, he rattles off pitifully undistinguished profanity, but we're cued to react to every stupid four-letter word as riotous. With Judge Reinhold, Stephen Elliott, Bronson Pinchot, Ronny Cox, Steven Berkoff, Lisa Eilbacher, and John Ashton. Directed by Martin Brest. (12/24/84) (34th St. East, D. W. Griffith, and Embassy.)

Bizarre, Bizarre (1937)—Marcel Carné directed this romantic, satirical comedy, set in Edwardian England, about the English mania for detective fiction. Jean-Louis Barrault is the detective-story reader who decides to commit his own perfect crime by murdering the author (Michel Simon). With Françoise Rosay as Barrault's inamorata (he gathers a bouquet for her by stealing the boutonnières of men who have been clobbered in the Limehouse alleys), Louis Jouvet, and Jean-Pierre Aumont. A memorable, deadpan dinner conversation about a duck à l'orange is the source of the American title. In French. (Metro Cinema; April 25.)

Blood Simple—A Texas roadhouse owner (Dan Hedaya) wants to have his young wife (Frances McDormand) and her lover (John Getz) murdered; he hires a killer, a good-ol'-boy private detective (M. Emmet Walsh) who takes his money and double-crosses him. The film provides a visually sophisticated form of gross-out humor; the material is thin, though, and there isn't enough suspense until about the last ten minutes, when the action is so grisly that it has a kick. Directed by Joel Coen, who wrote the screenplay with his brother Ethan. (2/25/85) (New Yorker. . . . ¶ Waverly; through April 18.)

Boomerang! (1947)—Elia Kazan was still a fledgling movie director when he did this modest, cleanly made, rather simplistic crime picture. It's based on an episode in the career of Homer Cummings (who was Franklin Roosevelt's first Attorney General); as a state's attorney in Connecticut, Cummings became convinced that a man he was about to prosecute was innocent, and set about gathering evidence to clear him. With Dana Andrews, Jane Wyatt, Lee J. Cobb, Sam Levene, Arthur Kennedy, Ed Begley, and Karl Malden. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 25.)

The Breakfast Club—Set mostly in the library of a suburban Chicago high school, this encounter-session movie by the writer-director John Hughes is about five students—a cross-section of the student body—who in the course of serving a 7 A.M.-4 P.M. Saturday detention peel off their layers of self-protection, confess their problems with their parents, and are stripped down to their "true selves." The five are: a champion wrestler (Emilio Estevez), a popular redhead "princess" (Molly Ringwald), a grind (Anthony Michael Hall), a glowering rebel-delinquent (Judd Nelson) who wears an earring, and a shy, skittish weirdo (Ally Sheedy). With the exception of Sheedy, who's a marvellous comic sprite and transcends her role until she is jerked back into the script mechanics, the movie is about a bunch of stereotypes who complain that other people see them as stereotypes. Hughes has talent, and when the kids are just killing time the dialogue has an easy, buggy rhythm, but this is a very wet enterprise. It appeals to young audiences by blaming adults for the kids' misery and enshrining the kids' most banal longings to be accepted and liked. Judd Nelson, who is supposed to represent what authorities want to crush, has the worst-conceived role, though Paul Gleason's part as the callous dean is a close runner-up. Also with John Kapelos as the school janitor. (4/8/85) (Gramercy, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Loews 83rd Quad; through April 18.)

Cutter's Way (1981)—This moody fantasia on post-Vietnam bitterness is set in Santa Barbara and other parts of Southern California; it has an odd, hallucinatory lyricism—the atmosphere is never less than absorbing. John Heard is Cutter, a mutilated veteran whose conversation is a series of twisted, rasped-out gibes; Jeff Bridges is lover-boy Bone, an Ivy League beach bum who lives on his suntanned amiability. When these two friends become involved in trying to expose and/or shake down an oil tycoon who they believe is also a sexual psychopath, the film suggests a counterculture version of the anti-Fascist thrillers of the forties. Directed by Ivan Passer, the film is an attempt to get at something that—if it were arrived at—might turn out to be less subtle than all the ambiguous reaching and groping suggests. With Lisa Eichhorn, Stephen Elliott, and Nina Van Pallandt. (Metro Cinema; April 23.)

Desperately Seeking Susan—With Rosanna Arquette and Madonna, directed by Susan Seidelman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Gemini, U. A. 85th St. East, Loews Paramount, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Falcon and the Snowman—The movie isn't really interested in why the intelligent Chris Boyce and his coked-up buddy, Daulton Lee, two boys from well-heeled, conservative Southern California backgrounds, sold key documents about U.S. surveillance satellites

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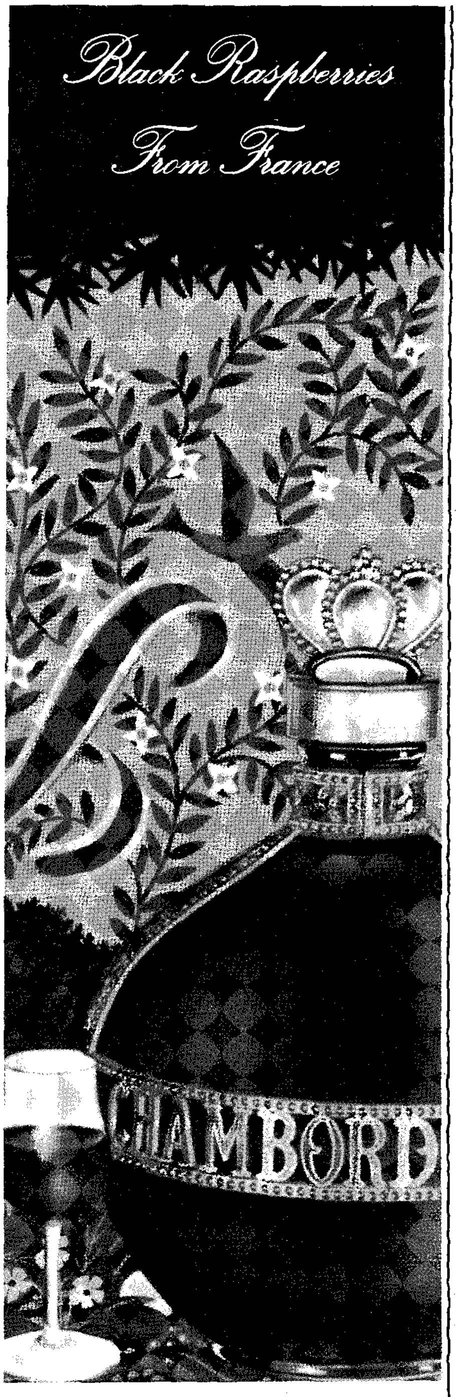

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to the Russians. The director, John Schlesinger, wants to shock the hell out of us by justifying Boyce, making the point that his actions weren't the traitorous ones—the C.I.A.'s were. While Schlesinger gives you the feeling that he knows what he's doing, he has no staying power—he doesn't develop any of the ideas he tosses in. Timothy Hutton, who plays Boyce, makes you respond to the freak hidden inside the proper manners, but the attention shifts to Sean Penn's whiny, strung-out Daulton Lee—an attention-getting bummer of a performance. With David Suchet, Dorian Harewood, Lori Singer, Pat Hingle, Boris Leskin, and Joyce Van Patten. (2/11/85) (Criterion Theatres.)

The 400 Blows (1959)—François Truffaut's eloquent first feature is a semi-autobiographical account of a twelve-year-old boy who—in the eyes of adults—becomes a delinquent. With Jean-Pierre Léaud. In French. (Lincoln Plaza; through April 18.)

French Cancan (1954)—Jean Renoir's account of how an impresario (Jean Gabin) builds the Moulin Rouge and revives the long-forgotten cancan. The show-folk charm is rather cloying. With Maria Felix, Françoise Arnoul, and Edith Piaf. In French. (Little Theatre, Public Theatre; starting April 19.)

The Gang's All Here (1943)—Busby Berkeley's own special brand of kaleidoscopic fantasy, turned into psychedelic surrealism by the electric reds and greens of Twentieth Century-Fox's color processing. Those who consider Berkeley a master consider this film his masterpiece. It is his maddest film: chorus girls dissolving into artichokes; a banana xylophone; and, for the song "The Lady in the Tutti-Frutti Hat," Carmen Miranda appears in platform wedgies on an avenue of giant strawberries. Alice Faye sings the torch song "No Love, No Nothing," and also introduces the "Polka-Dot Polka" ballet, which as a piece of staging passes description. With Benny Goodman and his orchestra, and Charlotte Greenwood, James Ellison, and Edward Everett Horton. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 24.)

Gilda (1946)—The story is turgid, melodramatic nonsense, but Rita Hayworth is at her most sexy-masochistic, and does a knockout of a fully dressed striptease as she sings "Put the Blame on Mame" (and it's Anita Ellis's voice we hear). With Glenn Ford and George Macready. Directed by Charles Vidor. (Thalia; April 22.)

Heartbreakers—With Peter Coyote and Nick Mancuso, directed by Bobby Roth. (Reviewed in this issue.) (57th St. Playhouse.)

Jules and Jim (1962)—François Truffaut's celebration of bohemian life in France and Germany in the years of artistic ferment between the First World War and the Second. The Austrian, Jules (Oskar Werner), and the Frenchman, Jim (Henri Serre), have a peaceful friendship. But when they are with Catherine (Jeanne Moreau), they feel alive; anything may happen. She's the catalyst, the troublemaker, the source of despair as well as the source of joy, an enchantress. Catherine marries Jules, who can't hold her, and, in despair, he encourages Jim's interest in her—"that way, she'll still be *ours*." She insists on her freedom to leave men, but if they leave her (as Jim does) she is as devastated and as helpless as any clinging vine (perhaps *more* devastated—she can't even ask for sympathy). Elliptical, full of wit and radiance, this is the best movie ever made about what most of us think of as the Scott Fitzgerald period. In French. (Lincoln Plaza; starting April 19.)

The Killing Fields—The British film shows us the Khmer Rouge transforming Cambodia into a nationwide gulag, and the scenes of this genocidal revolution have the breadth and terror of something deeply imagined. The movie tells the story of how Sydney Schanberg (Sam Waterston), who was the *Times* correspondent in Cambodia from 1972 to 1975, was separated from his interpreter and assistant, Pran (Haing S. Ngor), and of his remorse and general anguish until the wily, resourceful Pran, after four years of slave labor and hiding, made his way into Thailand, late in 1979, and got word to him. It's written like a TV docudrama, and it bogs down in the crosscutting between Pran's experiences of the atrocities in Cambodia and Schanberg's guilt and misery in various settings in the U.S. But it's by no means a negligible movie. Roland Joffé, making his début as a movie director, and the cinematographer, Chris Menges, give us imagery that suggests the work of a macabre lyric poet, and there are accomplished performances—most notably by John Malkovich, Bill Paterson, and Athol Fugard. (12/10/84) (Greenwich Playhouse, Cinema 3, and R.K.O. Century National Twin.)

The Lady Vanishes (1938)—Alfred Hitchcock's murder mystery about a fuzzy, jolly old lady who boards a train and disappears on it is directed with such skill and velocity that it has come to represent the quintessence of screen suspense. It provides some of the finest examples of Hitchcock touches—little shocks and perversities of editing and detail. The hero is played by a tall, callow young man making his first major film appearance—Michael Redgrave; the heroine is Margaret Lockwood, and the lady is Dame May Whitty. With Paul Lukas, Cecil Parker, Margaretta Scott. (Regency; April 21-23.)

The Last Picture Show (1971)—This straightforward, involving narrative picture about growing up in a small town in Texas in the early fifties was Peter Bogdanovich's first great success. It's plain and uncondescending in its re-creation of what it means to be a high-school athlete, of what a country dance hall is like, of the necking in cars and movie houses, and of the desolation that follows high-school graduation. Concerned with adolescent experience seen in terms of flatlands anomie—loneliness, ignorance about sex, confusion about one's aims in life—the movie has a basic decency of feeling, with people relating to one another, sometimes on very simple levels, and becoming miserable when they can't relate. The movie suggests what TV soap opera would be if it looked at ordinary experience in a non-exploitative way, if it had observation and humor. With Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Ellen Burstyn, Cybill Shepherd, Ben Johnson, Eileen Brennan, and Cloris Leachman. (Thalia; April 24.)

Last Tango in Paris (1972)—Marlon Brando, as the aging American Paul, is working out his aggression on the young bourgeois French girl, Jeanne (Maria Schneider), and the physical menace of sexuality that is emotionally charged is such a departure from everything that audiences had come to expect at the movies that the film created a sensation. It's a bold and imaginative work—a great work. Brando and the director, Bernardo Bertolucci, achieve realism with the terror of actual experience still alive on the screen. With Jean-Pierre Léaud, Massimo Girotti, Catherine Allegret, and Maria Michi. In French and English. (Cinema Village; April 24-25.)

The Little Shop of Horrors (1960)—Amateurish yet funny, in a gross way. A simpleton (Jonathan Haze) who works in a florist shop has a prize plant that becomes a voracious blood-seeking man-eater. It cries, "Feed me! Feed me!" The film is notable for the performance that Jack Nicholson gives in a minor role; as a pain freak who is in ecstasy in a dentist's chair, he shows the comic intensity that later made him a star. Produced and directed by Roger Corman. (Thalia; April 26.)

Lost in America—Original and pleasantly snappy. It lacks the fullness of a major comedy, but Albert Brooks, who stars in it and directed, is on to something: satirizing the upper middle class from within, he shows the nagging terror along with the complacency. And he keeps you laughing fairly steadily. As David, an L.A. advertising whiz, he's an only slightly exaggerated specimen of a large number of rising young businessmen and professional men—the insecure successes, the swollen-headed worriers. He's an anxious wreck who tortures himself and his wife over every detail of his existence. With her little-girl breathiness and her look of panic, Julie Hagerty is an ideal choice for the timid, depressed woman who puts up with him. The picture is about what happens when these two buy a luxury motor home, and, with the security of a nest egg of roughly a hundred and forty-five thousand dollars, set out to find themselves and get in touch with the real America. With Garry Marshall as the pit boss of the Desert Inn Casino, and Art Frankel and Michael Greene. The script is by Brooks and Monica Johnson. (4/8/85) (Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through April 18. . . . ¶ R.K.O. Century Art, and Manhattan; starting April 19.)

The Makioka Sisters (1983)—Kon Ichikawa

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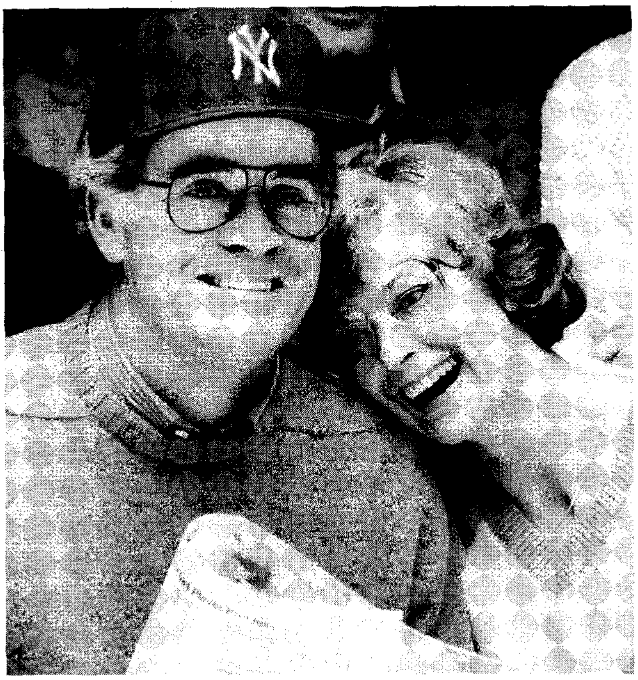

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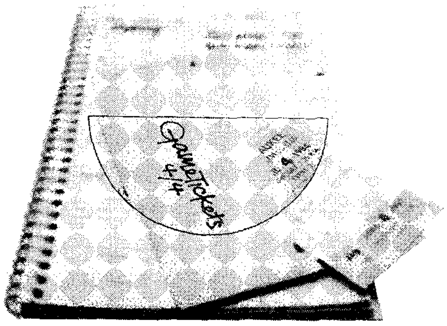

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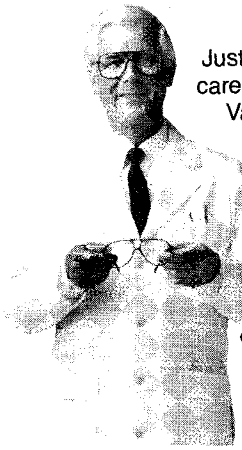

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celebrates the delicate beauty of the four Makioka sisters—the four heiresses of an aristocratic Osaka family, who move as if always conscious that they must be visual poetry—and at the same time he makes you feel that there's something amusingly perverse in their poise and their politesse. Set in 1938, the film is like a succession of evanescent revelations—the images are stylized and formal, yet the quick cutting melts them away. The venerable Ichikawa is doing what so many younger directors have claimed to be doing: he's making visual music. And he's doing it without turning the actors into zombies, and without losing his sense of how corruption and beauty and humor are all rolled up together. In Japanese. (3/11/85) (Quad Cinema; through April 25.)

Mr. Arkadin (1955)—Orson Welles directed and starred in this story of a fabulously wealthy dope smuggler who hires a man to trace his past. Ambitious and flamboyant but, whether because of technical problems or script problems or both, a fiasco. With Michael Redgrave, Akim Tamiroff, Mischa Auer, and Katina Paxinou. (Metro Cinema; April 22.)

Ohayo (1958)—Fairly funny comedy by Ozu about modern middle-class life. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; April 24.)

A Passage to India—This admirable version of E. M. Forster's 1924 novel about the tragicomedy of British colonial rule was adapted, directed, and edited by David Lean, who knows how to do pomp and the moral hideousness of empire better than practically anybody else around. Peggy Ashcroft comes through with a transcendent piece of acting as Mrs. Moore, and Judy Davis is close to perfection as the repressed Miss Quested, who longs for adventure; they are the two women whose attempt to get to know the Indians socially results in a charge of attempted rape against Dr. Aziz, played by Victor Banerjee, a fine, fluid actor who's like a piece of erotic sculpture. It may not be the highest praise to say that a movie is orderly and dignified, but of its kind this "Passage to India" is awfully good, until the last half hour or so; the concluding scenes wobble all over the place. The cast is just about irreproachable. It includes James Fox, Nigel Havers, Art Malik, Michael Culver, Saeed Jaffrey, Roshan Seth, and Sandra Hotz. (2 hours and 43 minutes.) (1/14/85) (23rd St. West Triplex, Festival, and New Yorker.)

Places in the Heart—This inspirational film, written and directed by Robert Benton, is set in his home town, Waxahachie, Texas, in 1935. Sally Field plays a good Christian woman with two children, who is suddenly widowed and left without enough money to meet the next mortgage payment. She holds her family together and hangs on to her house and forty acres by, of course, grit and total determination. The movie's major accomplishment is that it never goes over the brink into utter corny shamelessness. (10/15/84) (Guild. . . . ¶ Gemini; through April 18.)

A Private Function—It never quite makes the final leap into lewd farce, but it's pretty funny anyway. The action is set in a small Yorkshire town in 1947, during the worst of the postwar austerity, and the plot involves the efforts of the local pillars of society (Denholm Elliott, John Normington, Richard Griffiths) to fatten a hidden, "unlicensed" pig for a banquet celebrating the nuptials of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip. They run into trouble when the pig is stolen by a mild-mannered chiropodist (Michael Palin), who is encouraged by his Lady Macbeth of a wife (Maggie Smith). The movie is trivial, but alive and unruly; the characters cheat and conspire on such a low level that it suggests "Volpone" set in a cabbage patch. With Liz Smith, Bill Paterson, and Rachel Davies. Directed by Malcolm Mowbray. (3/25/85) (Paris.)

The Purple Rose of Cairo—The thirteenth movie that Woody Allen has directed, and possibly his finest creation. He wrote it for Mia Farrow, and it seems scaled to her cheekbones. The time is 1935, and she is Cecilia, who lives in a small town in New Jersey and can't hold a job for long because her thoughts wander away to the glamorous worlds she sees on the screen. Jeff Daniels plays a dashing young screen character who bounds down from the black-and-white image and into color, and takes Cecilia out of the theatre with him; he's also the ambitious young actor who arrives in the town to try to persuade the character to go back up on the screen where he belongs. Also with Danny Aiello, Stephanie Farrow, Zoe Caldwell, John Wood, Ed Herrmann, Van Johnson, and Dianne Wiest. (3/25/85) (Murray Hill, Beekman, and Cinema Studio. . . . ¶ Movieland; through April 18. . . . ¶ Criterion Theatres; starting April 19.)

Return of the Jedi (1983)—Some of the trick effects in this concluding film of the "Star Wars" trilogy might seem miraculous if the imagery had any lustre, but this is an impersonal and rather junky piece of moviemaking. And every time there's a possibility of a dramatic climax—a chance to engage the audience emotionally with something awesome—the director, Richard Marquand, trashes it. With Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, Harrison Ford, Billy Dee Williams, Anthony Daniels as C-3PO, and Peter Mayhew as Chewbacca. (Greenwich Playhouse, and R.K.O. Century Warner Twin. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through April 18.)

Stranger Than Paradise—The young writer-director Jim Jarmusch uses a minimalist aesthetic for low-key comic effects. This punk picaresque is in black-and-white, and each scene is a single take followed by a blackout; the three principal characters—deadpan deadbeats—live in dead space. Jarmusch keeps the picture formal and cool, and it has an odd, nonchalant charm; it's fun. But it's softhearted fun—shaggy-dog minimalism—and it doesn't have enough ideas (or laughs) for its ninety-minute length. With John Lurie, Eszter Balint, and Richard Edson. (11/12/84) (Quad Cinema.)

The 39 Steps (1935)—This suave, amusing spy melodrama is directed with so sure a touch that the suspense is charged with wit; it's one of the three or four best things Hitchcock ever did. The lead, Robert Donat, was that rarity among English actors: a performer with both personal warmth and professional skill. The heroine is Madeleine Carroll. Hitchcock paired them off by the mischievous use of a gimmick: a man and a woman who detest each other are handcuffed together; as day wears into night, they fall in love. The movie thus contains an extra—implicit, as it were—element of bathroom-humor suspense. The film also has one of his rare emotionally felt sequences: the brief, chilling scenes between Peggy Ashcroft and John Laurie as a mismated couple joined together by real chains. With Godfrey Tearle. (Regency; April 24-27.)

The Warriors (1979)—Walter Hill's spectacle takes its story from Xenophon's Anabasis and its style from the taste of the modern urban dispossessed—in neon signs, graffiti, and the thrill of gaudiness. The film enters into the spirit of urban-male tribalism and the feelings of kids who believe that they own the streets because they keep other kids off them. It has—in visual terms—the kind of impact that "Rock Around the Clock" had when it was played behind the titles of "Blackboard Jungle." It's like visual rock. The action runs from night until dawn, and most of it is in crisp, bright Day-Glo colors against the terrifying New York blackness. There's a night-blooming, psychedelic shine to the whole baroque movie. With Michael Beck, Deborah Van Valkenburgh, and David Patrick Kelly. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; April 24-25.)

Witness—An eight-year-old Amish boy (Lukas Haas), on his first trip to a city, sees a murder taking place in the men's room of Philadelphia's Thirtieth Street train station. In order to protect the boy and his widowed mother (Kelly McGillis) from the killers, the police captain (Harrison Ford) who's in charge of the investigation tries to hide their identities, and, with a bullet wound in his side, drives them back to their farm in Lancaster County before he collapses. Directed by the Australian Peter Weir, the movie seems to take its view of the Amish from a quaint dreamland, a Brigadoon of tall golden wheat, and to take its squalid, hyped-up view of life in Philadelphia from prolonged exposure to TV cop shows. With Alexander Godunov, Patti LuPone, Josef Sommer, Danny Glover, and Jan Rubes. (2/25/85) (Loews Tower East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

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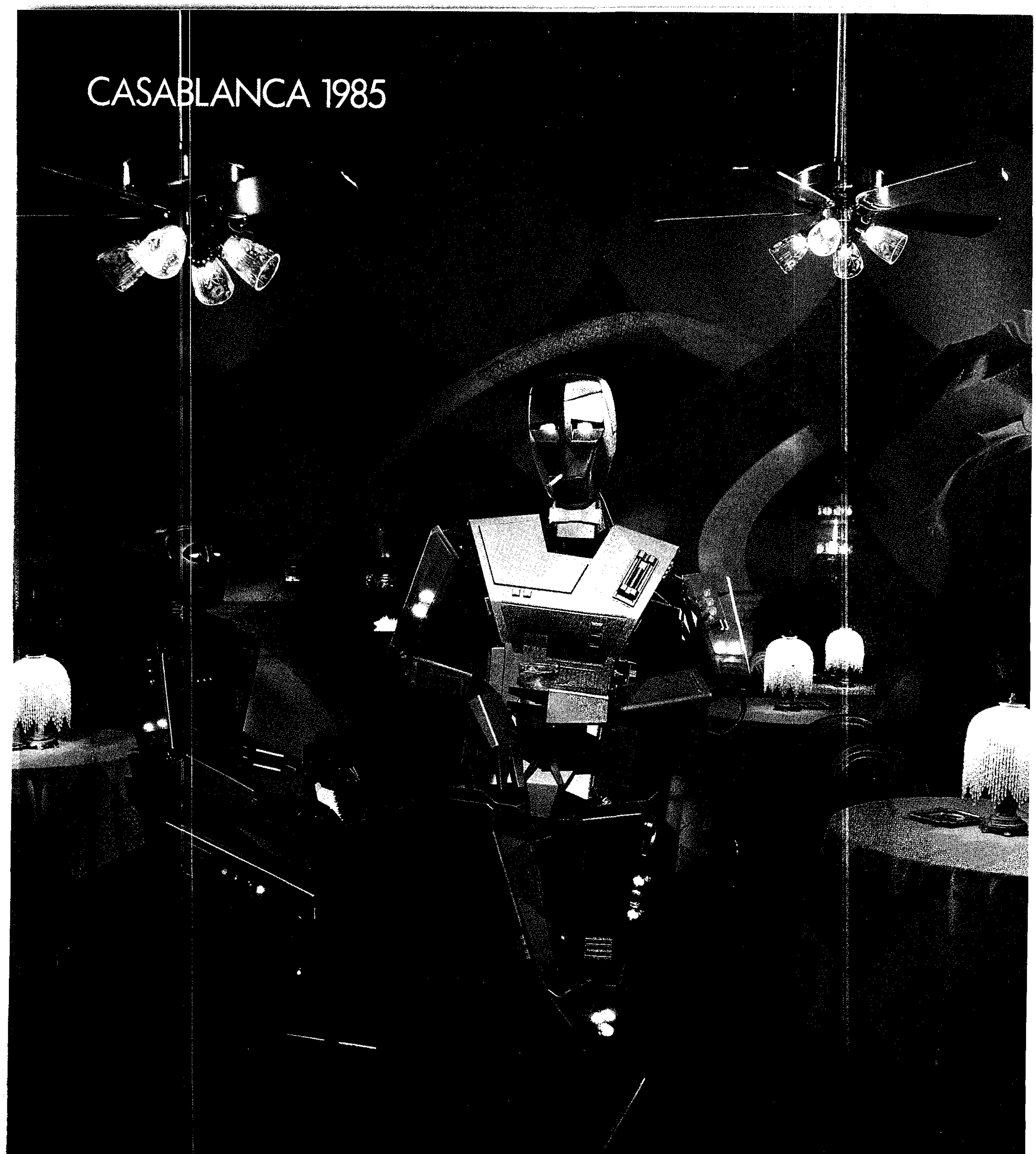

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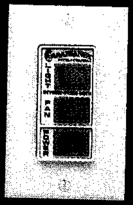
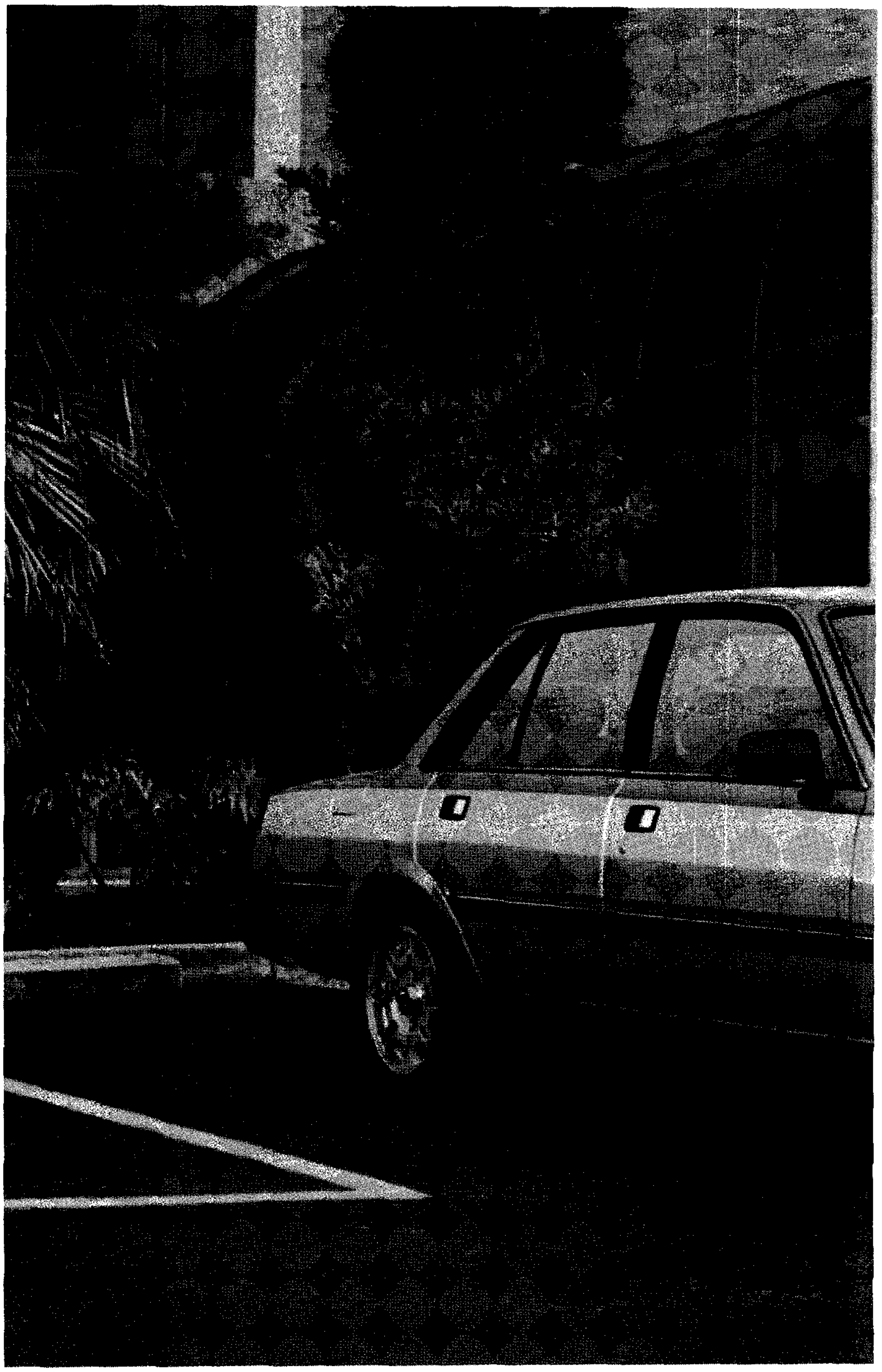


Bringing baby home in the Peugeot



She has ten tiny fingers, around which she has already wrapped her grandparents. And ten tiny toes.

She has enough clothes to stock a small store, including eight pairs of little knitted bootees that will never stay on.

Her face goes scarlet with anger if there's any stalling at feeding time.

There is some agreement that she looks like her grandmother on her mother's side—although this notion does not sit well with the other side of the family.

Dad will get up and check her fourteen times during her first night at home, each time making a mental note to do something about the creak in the floorboard.

She has pudgy cheeks, fat little knees, and almost no hair.

She is, they agree, the most beautiful baby anyone ever had.

Oh, the responsibility of it all!

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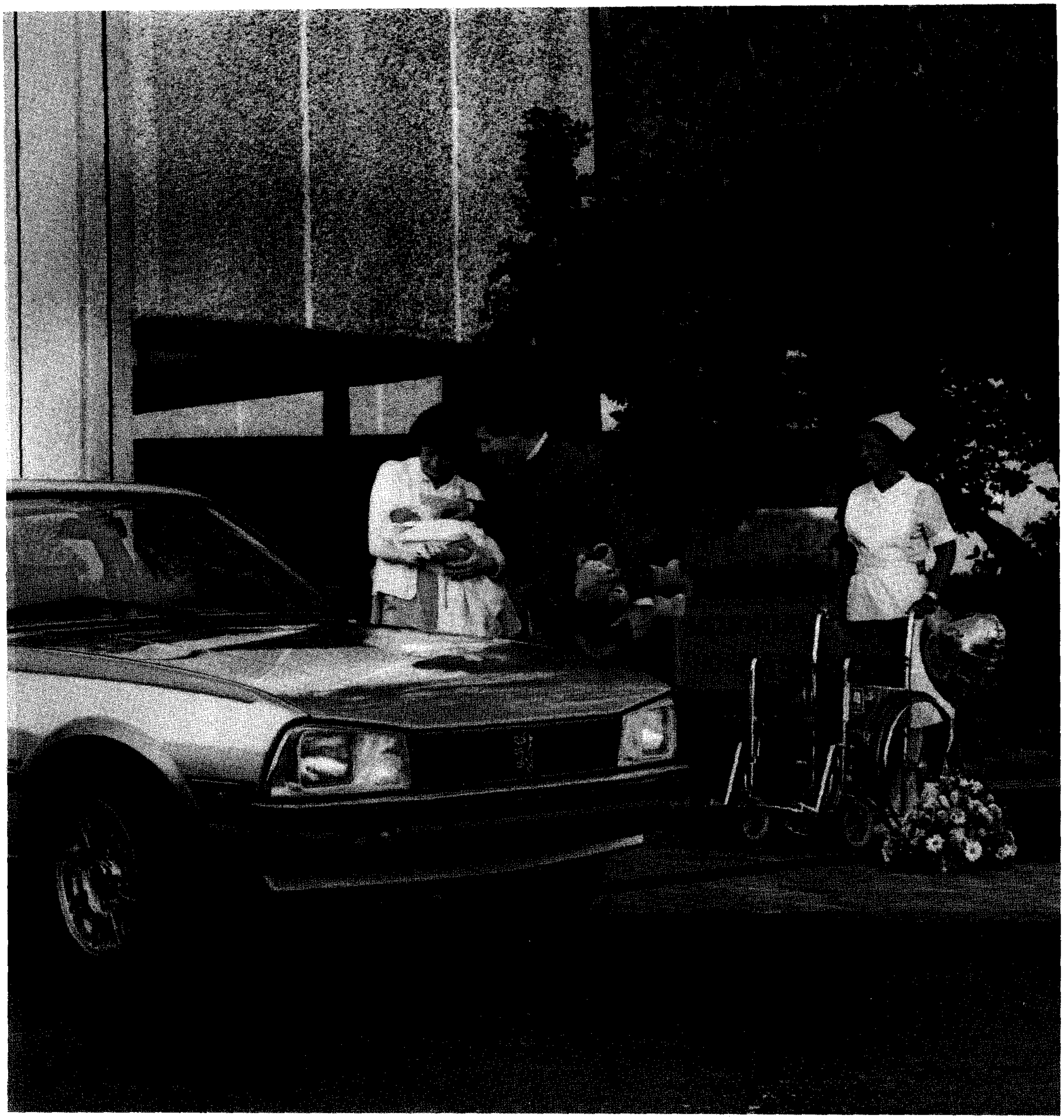

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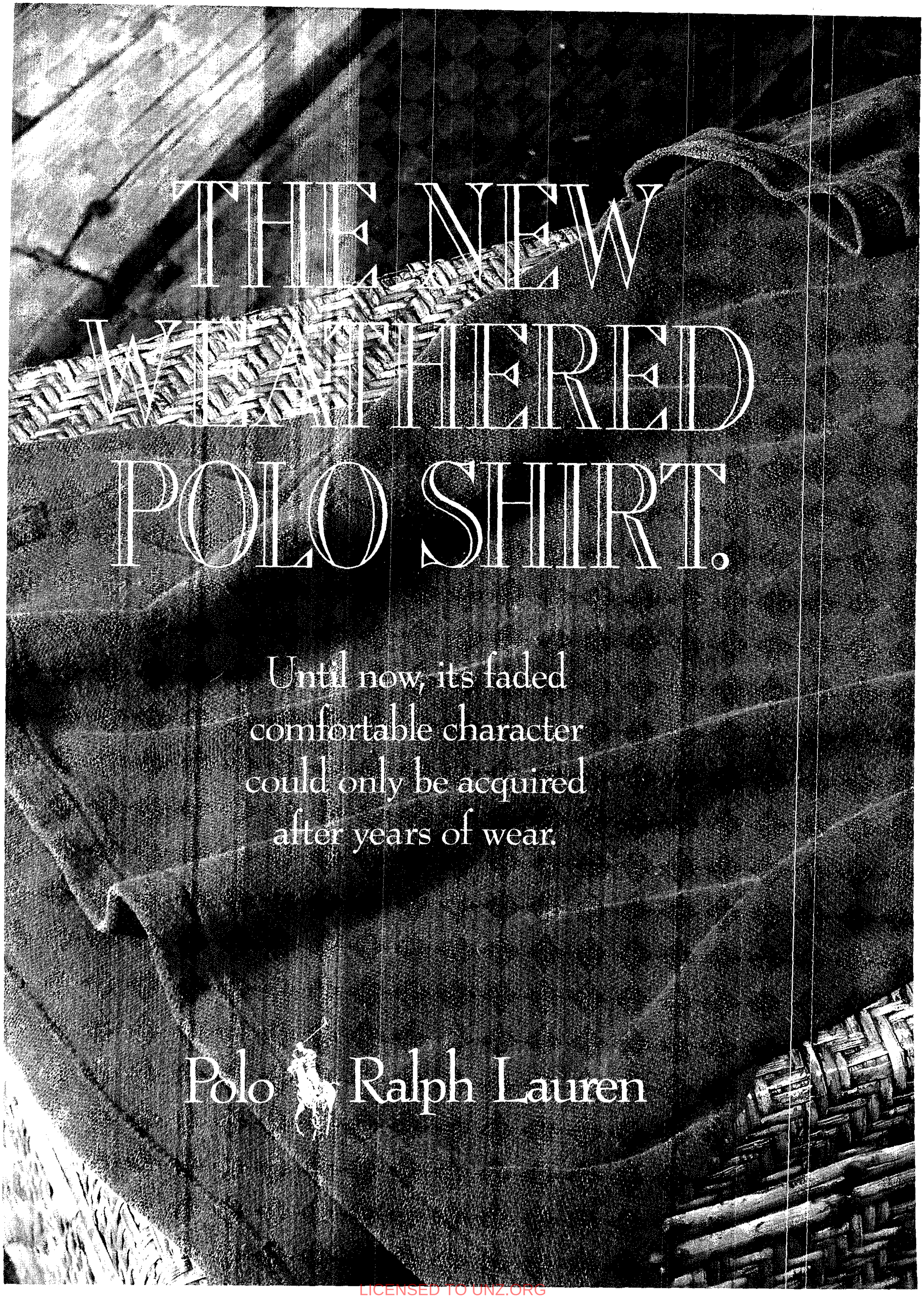
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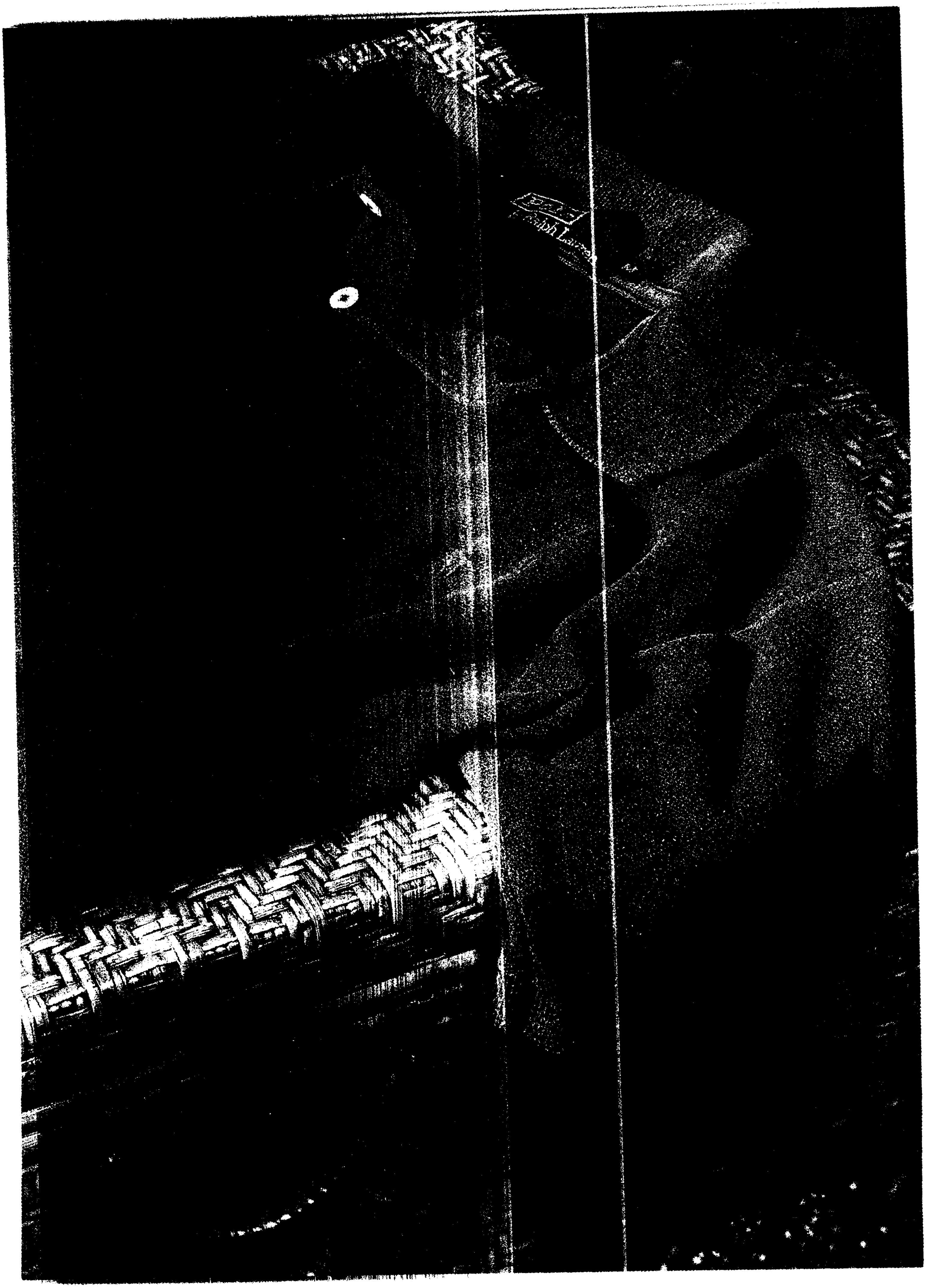
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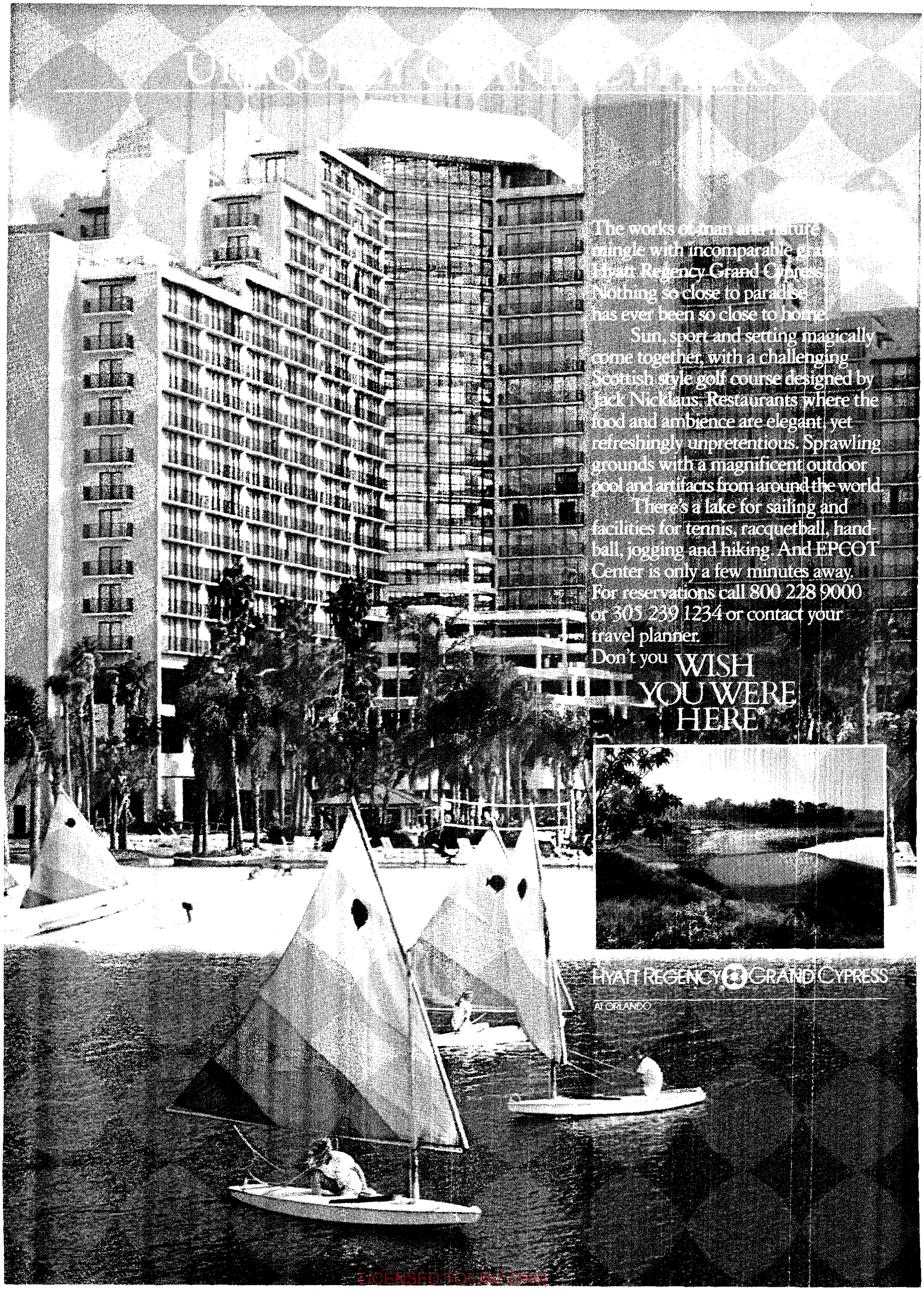

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

IN 1925, when the magazine was founded, by Harold Ross (its first editor-in-chief) and Raoul Fleischmann (its first publisher), *The New Yorker*, like any new publication, had to fumble its way toward its natural character. We, the editorial people, knew by instinct that to be able to make *The New Yorker* the magazine we wanted it to be we had to separate ourselves from the business side of the venture. We felt that editorial independence was total or was nothing, that the line had to be drawn firmly and with finality. We therefore asserted our editorial independence. We did not write anything down; we just made the point in the course of a number of brief conversations. In this impromptu manner we claimed our independence, and, since we realized that it was a privilege, we determined not to take it for granted but to guard it carefully. Raoul Fleischmann, obeying some happy instinct of his own, acknowledged it and scrupulously respected it as long as he lived. When he died, in 1969, he was succeeded by his son, Peter Fleischmann, who, with wisdom and courage, followed his father's example to the letter. In sixty years, neither man ever made an editorial suggestion, ever commented favorably or unfavorably on anything we published or on any editorial direction the magazine was taking, ever permitted the advertising or circulation or accounting people to bring any pressure to bear on us. The Fleischmanns seemed to find satisfaction enough in providing a business framework within which we could get out the best magazine that we were capable of creating. There may have been occasions when both men were displeased or perplexed by what they found in the magazine, but, if so, they acted with restraint and self-discipline: they said nothing. The result was an absolute editorial independence rare in publishing history.

In a week or two, the stockholders of The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., will be asked to vote on a merger with Advance Publications, Inc. Advance belongs to S. I. Newhouse, Jr., and Donald Newhouse, who are brothers. Their company is a conglomerate that owns nine Condé Nast magazines, twenty-nine newspapers, a cable-television network, and a book-publishing company, Random House. Donald Newhouse mainly looks after the newspapers and the cable system, and S. I. Newhouse mainly looks after the magazines and the book publishing, but the brothers make all major decisions together. In the merger agreement between The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., and Advance Publications, Inc., we have been assured that *The New Yorker* "will be operated on a stand-alone basis as a separate company." In addition, Advance has said in the agreement that it wishes to maintain *The New Yorker's* "personnel and their operating practices and traditions, including the tradition of complete editorial independence: the editors having total control of the magazine's editorial character, policies, procedures, and content." As we approach the beginning of a new phase, we reassert our editorial independence. We reassert it with these few formal words. We feel certain that the Newhouses will respect it as rigorously as the Fleischmanns did.

But what does this editorial independence mean? What is it, actually? It is simply freedom. It frees us to say what we believe to be true, to report what we believe to be true, to write what we want to write, to draw what we want to draw—to publish what we want to publish—with no outside intervention, without fear, without constraints, in defiance of commercial pressures or any other pressures beyond those of our own conscience and sense of responsibility. It also frees us to be open to experiment and innovation, to new forms and styles, whether journalistic or literary. The freedom that the editorial office enjoys includes the freedom of every staff writer and every staff artist and every editor (and every non-staff contributor) to follow his or her own impulses, inclinations, aspirations, passionate interests. No writer or artist or editor is ever given an order. When a journalistic writer undertakes a new project, it is always done in full agreement with the editor; the two have to bring to it the same enthusiasm. And no editing is ever imposed on a writer; every editorial suggestion

Richard Edes Harrison

is presented in the form of a question, and is settled by agreement between writer and editor. The artists are similarly free. And our editors edit only what they are willing to edit.

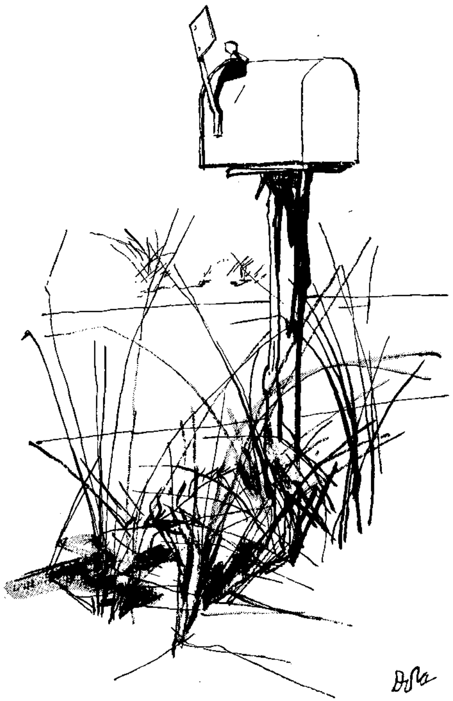
We edit *The New Yorker* as a magazine for readers, not as an advertising medium. We regard our readers as readers, not as consumers or as a "market." Just as advertising is an essential part of our country's life, it is an essential part of *The New Yorker's* life. But it must not be linked to the editorial content of the magazine. They belong in separate realms, and the two realms must remain separate, must remain cordially apart. In this atmosphere of freedom, we have never published anything in order to sell magazines, to cause a sensation, to be controversial, to be popular or fashionable, to be "successful." We have published only what we thought had merit of one kind or another.

The business ownership of *The New Yorker* may change hands, but the idea of *The New Yorker*—the tradition of *The New Yorker*, the spirit of *The New Yorker*—has never been owned by anyone and never will be owned by anyone. It cannot be bought or sold. It exists in the minds of a group of writers, artists, editors, and editorial assistants who have been drawn together by literary, journalistic, aesthetic, and ethical principles they share, and by a shared outlook on the world. Whatever else may happen, it will endure. We need not name or define our principles or standards, for they are implicit in what we publish in our pages each week. Yet this may be the moment to say that if *The New Yorker* could be everything we want it to be it would unfailingly combine thorough, accurate, fresh, inspired reporting with fiction that runs deep and says something that hasn't been said before; it would be funny as frequently as possible; it would contribute something of worth to the national discourse; it would cast light; it would be well-wishing; and it would be humane. In an age when television screens are too often bright with nothing, we value substance. Amid a chaos of images, we value coherence. We believe in the printed word. And we believe in clarity. And in immaculate syntax. And in the beauty of the English language. We believe that the truth can turn up in a cartoon, in one of the magazine's covers, in a poem, in a short story, in an essay, in an editorial comment, in a humor piece, in a critical piece, in a reporting piece. And if any single principle transcends all the others and informs all the others it is to try to tell the truth. *The New Yorker* will continue to change, as it has changed through the years, but our basic principles and standards will remain exactly what they have been. With that knowledge, and with the assurances that we freely asked our prospective publishers to give us and that they freely gave, we are confident that we will preserve *The New Yorker*—not merely a magazine that bears its name but *this* magazine: *The New Yorker* itself.

• •

The Largest Cockatoo

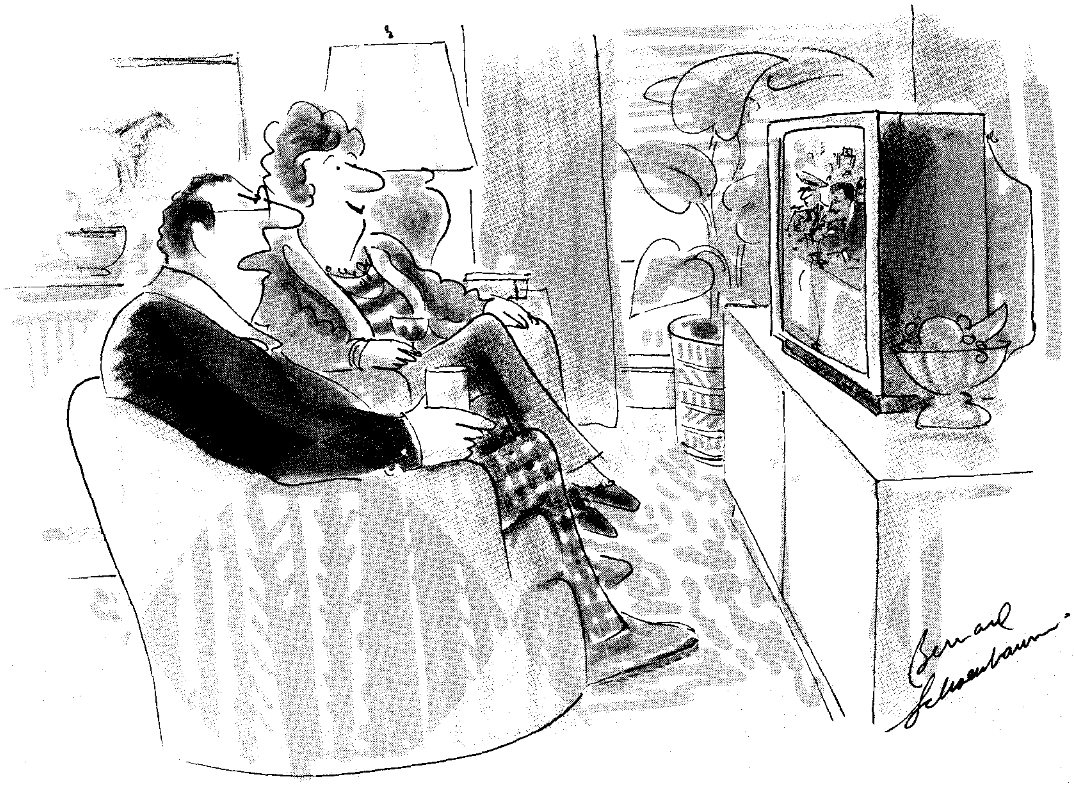
EVERYBODY was smiling the other morning in the Rain Forest habitat of the World of Birds at the Bronx Zoo, even though the people carrying cameras were being told to wait, because the bird they wanted to photograph had to be viewed by only one person at a time. But let us begin at the beginning, which for us was the receipt of a large, handsome photograph of a large, handsome bird, black, with a feathery crest and the biggest beak you've ever seen. In fact, the scientific name of the bird—the black palm cockatoo—is *Probosciger aterrimus*, which translates as "very black snout-bearing." The text accompanying the photograph noted, "The palm cockatoo is the largest of the cockatoos, a parrot subfamily. The palm cockatoo boasts blue-black plumage offset by featherless red cheeks, making it a striking animal to look at. Its most singular feature, however, is its extraordinarily large beak, which it uses to open fruit and nuts. It doesn't crack these fruits open but, rather, saws them open with the edge of its beak. It then spoons out the meat with its long fleshy tongue."



We had gone through the Asian end of the Rain Forest to reach the meeting place of the visitors and those in charge of the cockatoos, and were now seated in a bow-window-fronted alcove bearing the label "Asia: The Forest Edge." Birds flew around beyond the window and came to look in at us through the glass—fairy bluebirds and brown sickle-billed birds of paradise and gold-crested mynahs. The black palm cockatoo, we were told, is a tall bird, but the tallest *man* in the room, probably, was Dr. Donald Bruning, curator of ornithology at the Zoo. Among those who beamed, he beamed the most brightly as he greeted us visitors and told us about what was happening.

"It's really a very pleasant event occurring today," Dr. Bruning said, "and I'd like to start off by introducing a couple of dignitaries we have with us this morning—Mr. Jerome Smith, deputy chief of the law-enforcement division of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and Professor Sambas Wirakusumah, the outgoing educational and cultural attaché of the Indonesian Embassy in Washington. This morning's event is very pleasing evidence of coöperation between governments and the zoos of this country. A shipment of black palm cockatoos, which are among the largest and most spectacular members of the parrot family and are found only in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and West Irian, the Indonesian part of New Guinea, came to this country illegally a year and a half ago and was seized by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Eleven zoos that belong to the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums, or A.A.Z.P.A., agreed to hold these birds for the Service while the case went through the courts, and it was eventually settled to practically everyone's satisfaction. And now eight of the birds—four pairs—will be returned to Indonesia for a breeding program run by the

Indonesian government in conjunction with these eleven zoos in North America. I will be escorting the birds back to Indonesia, starting out this afternoon, and look forward to the setting up of the breeding program there and also one in the United States. Now I'd like to introduce Mr. Jerome Smith, of the Fish and Wildlife Service."



"Sure Weinberger has that confident air. Who wouldn't with the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines behind him?"

"About a year and a half ago, one hundred and three black palm cockatoos were smuggled out of Indonesia by way of a little island in eastern Indonesia called Wangiwangi and were taken to Singapore," Mr. Smith said. He went on to tell us that, as protected animals, they should have been accompanied by official export permits, and that some papers were submitted to the American officials, but that the Service was not satisfied with those papers, and investigated. First, it inquired of Singapore, the last port through which the birds passed before coming to Miami, their port of entry. The Singapore authorities said that the cockatoos came from Malaysia. But there are no black palm cockatoos in the wild in Malaysia. The authorities in Malaysia claimed that the customs officers had been given an Indonesian permit and had therefore allowed the birds through. The Indonesian paper proved to be unsatisfactory, so the Fish and Wildlife Service was justified in having confiscated the cockatoos at Miami. "There has been maximum coöperation, not only between officials in the United States but between them and their opposite numbers in Indonesia," Mr. Smith said. "Without the Indonesians' coöperation, we could not have seized the birds and won the case and taken care of them, let alone returned them to Indonesia. We look forward to more coöperation between Indonesia, the A.A.Z.P.A., and other organizations to protect the world's wildlife."

Next, Professor Sambas Wirakusumah said a few gratified words and then explained that though his country had been slow, perhaps, in coming to the rescue of wildlife, that was because it was a large country, with many problems, but that things were getting better now. He thanked everybody, and the formal part of the proceedings was over. Dr. Bruning announced that those wishing to see some of the black palm cockatoos would now be taken to them, and a line formed at a nearby door, cameras at the ready.

"It's a unique bird," Dr. Bruning remarked to us as we took our place in the line. "And, unfortunately, it's disappearing, mainly because of habitat destruction in New Guinea. Its feathers are very highly prized by the local people, and the fact that it eats the palm nuts, which the people also like, is another disadvantage. And it's big, and good to eat, so they do eat it. So it's disappearing. Fortunately, there's one area where it's doing a little better—northern Australia, where it's being very carefully protected. There the numbers are not declining so rapidly. It can hold its own as long as Australia keeps enough parks and reserves, keeps the forest intact. If the forest disappears, so does the bird."

"The value of the black palm cockatoo is so high that it's worth the smugglers' efforts to get it out," Mr. Smith said. "If the hundred-odd that they tried to bring in were sold here commercially, they would probably fetch in excess of half a million dollars, because they run from five thousand to fifteen thousand apiece. Collectors will pay that because the birds are so hard to get, so rare."

Mr. Smith then told us the story of the dubious documents. According to Appendix Two of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, there can be trade among countries in such species if they are accompanied by the proper documents, and the birds at first seemed to be legally exported. Since Singapore had documents from Malaysia, it issued a document based on these. But the Malaysian papers were based on an Indonesian document given by an unauthorized person. "It was a sort of transport permit given by a local chieftain in Wangiwangi, saying that the birds could be carried across his land—that was all," Mr. Smith said. "Nobody started checking until the birds got to the United States, and then we did. We found that Indonesia hadn't issued any permits, and that's why we took possession. The Indonesians supplied all the necessary affidavits so we could make our case, but it wasn't until last fall, when I went out to Singapore and Indonesia, that I got the actual documents involved. In Indonesia, they had to read that chieftain's permit to me and tell me what it was, because my Indonesian isn't all that good." Mr. Smith laughed. Like everybody else that morning, he seemed happy.

"So it's taken a year and a half for this fascinating drama to play itself out," said Dr. Bruning. "And now it's not the end, it's just the beginning. For the first time, we have a population of black palm cockatoos in the hands of professional people who know how to get birds to breed. We can get this breeding consortium together—members of the A.A.Z.P.A. and others—and they can accomplish what has been done only once or twice before: breeding them in captivity. Think of what that might mean to the wild population once its habitat is stabilized. Birds of the second, third, or fourth generation could be released in the wild. Now the Indonesians, too, can work on captive breeding. All of us can share the information."

As far as is known, cockatoos do not breed in groups, and males don't seem to get on with one another. The breeders have to figure out whether to keep two pairs close together, so they can encourage each other, or to keep them in isolation, pair by pair. They don't know these things yet, but one day they will.

"We now have seventy-four birds distributed among the consortium, so we ought to get some action," said Mr. Smith.

It was our turn to go in and interview the cockatoos. Two travel cases were ready, holding two of the eight birds that were returning to Indonesia under the chaperonage of Dr. Bruning. Above the boxes, on a roost, was a female cockatoo, who, Dr. Bruning said, was not going. Motionless, she sat as if posing for a profile photograph: a splendid blue-black creature with a crest and an oddly naked face. "The skin of the face turns red during the mating season, and afterward fades again," said Dr. Bruning. He contemplated her hopefully.

Perking and Assessing

THAT'S some feeling—the one that hits around four o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon or a quarter past eleven on a Thursday morning, just when you're giving thought to checking out the action at the water cooler or maybe going over to the bank to see who's standing in line. Before you're even out of your chair, that familiar voice from within runs through the familiar questions: Are responsibilities continually added to my position? Do my duties require a self-activating individual? Are there many assignments that have to be dealt with simultaneously? Is idea generation key to my role? Do I have a great deal of one-to-one interaction with colleagues? Should I be groomed for advancement? Should I consider assertiveness training? Do I need assistance in time planning and organization or guidance in communication skills? All the timeless brain twisters that Hegel and Kierkegaard dealt with non-stop, the ambiguities that a George Steinbrenner or a Donald Trump or a Joey Adams eats for breakfast.

The other day, around noon, in the Louis XVI Suite of the Waldorf, these ponderables were bouncing all over the place. Any one of them could have caused serious injury to an unwary bystander. It was a meeting of the Sales Executives Club of New York. When you smudge the notation in your little pocket appointment calendar and consequently arrive late for a lunch date with the Sales Executives Club—after the cash bar has been busy for forty-five minutes—you don't necessarily feel like colliding with a crippling perplexity. Instead, you want to breathe deep and shuffle back into the hallway, where you can quickly leaf through a copy of *The Sales Executive*, the club's official publication, which you have brought along just in case. In other words, you don't want to hard-charge into the room and start heavy-rapping with Ed Flanagan, president of the club. First, you want to read some sage words from Ed about relaxing and enjoying yourself while you learn, about getting to know other interesting executives in a friendly and exhilarating atmosphere, about maybe even winning a door prize.

This puts you in a proper frame of mind. Now you can reënter the room and network with the coat-check woman, who wants a dollar and a quarter just for stashing your briefcase. Because this impairs your ability to go over to the cash bar and impact a Bloody Mary upon your brain, you try the other end of the room, where the Sales Executives Club's

I'VE FOUND IT, BUT IF I SHOUT 'EUREKA!' BILSLEY OVER THERE WILL KNOW I'VE FOUND IT.

video kiosk unspools a two-minute riff that dynamizes you with a sudden temptation to grow professionally; to develop your career and entertain customers and pick up practical marketing, sales, and management ideas; to experience moments with top personalities from business, government, entertainment, and sports; to take advantage of special public-speaking workshops and special industry programs; to gain a global perspective and to attend the spring outing and the annual Christmas party.

"As in real life, Avery, you're only as good as your second serve."

You're perking. Now you're ready to elicit feedback and to assess changes in mood. You feel bold enough to strive for sufficient clarity. Next thing you know, you're shaking hands firmly with Jim, a securities dealer, and nodding empathetically and confidently while Hal describes screening security personnel for nuclear installations. With unmistakable authoritativeness, you take advantage of some free peanuts. Tricia says hi, and you catch a glimpse of yourself noting physical behavior—posture, gesture, facial expressions. Pretty soon, you self-activate right into the dining room, where Nick, Myrna, Susan, Lianna, George, and about a hundred and fifty other people have gathered to hear Jeanne Greenberg, chairman of Personality Dynamics, Inc., explain why, when it comes to high-tech products, the old rules of selling no longer apply. Down in Princeton, Jeanne Greenberg and her staff evaluate sales and management personnel for industry. Which means that instead of hanging around the water cooler the people at Personality Dynamics are out there distinguishing between facts, opinions, and feelings while asking such tough questions as: What kinds of persons are motivated to expose themselves daily to the abuse, rejection, risk, and even hostility that salespeople must endure to make a living?

Lunch goes by in a happy blur of pea soup and chicken in some sort of sauce and broccoli and potatoes and door prizes, and then Roger Lamour, chairman of the board of the Sales Executives Club, does an informative buildup of Jeanne Greenberg, a recognized authority on the relationship between personality and sales effectiveness. He regains his footing quickly after calling her Jean Seberg.

Jeanne Greenberg says, "The psychology of successful salespeople . . . Last three years—what it takes to make a successful high-tech salesperson . . . As we shift from an industrial to an information society . . . New breed of . . . In the beginning, a high-tech product was characterized as something that made it easier . . . If you think about it, the first salesman of an abacus had a tough job. . . . Today's high-tech product quickly becomes tomorrow's state-of-the-art, and the day after is merely commonplace. . . . Ever-changing, innovative, and fastest-of-all-growing . . . Traits of high-tech salesperson: personal organization, detail orientation, service motivation—different from ego-driven salesperson . . . Empathy and ego strength . . . Moving people from the technical side to the sales side would be corporate suicide by and large. . . . Potential record-breaking salesperson could be working for your company right now; but where do you find these geniuses? . . . Solution-oriented consultant salesperson may be considered specialized today, but, remember, this could be the prototype for tomorrow."

Jeanne Greenberg accepts the speaker's bronze medallion—it goes well with her white suit, blue blouse, and dark-brown hair. Now it's time for you to get back to the office and strategize a way to become a prototype for tomorrow. You're ready to jump into a cab, zip through traffic, catch the express elevator, move briskly to your cubicle, close the door, pull out the tabula rasa, and define the functional qualities of your job, and if no one interrupts you're probably not coming out of that cubicle until you've made a list of those functional qualities and prioritized the hell out of them. But first you will want to stop by the coat-check room, where your briefcase is waiting. O.K., so you get there and you observe that the coat-check woman is looking for a hole in the floor to crawl into. It's not her fault that the door to the coat-check room is closed and the lock is jammed and her key won't interface with the cylinders. In a high-tech society, this might even be a blessing. It will take maybe twenty minutes before solution-oriented screened security personnel can devise a way to unjam the lock. Twenty minutes sounds just right—some time to think.

THE SALIERI VARIATIONS

DEAR MILOŠ FORMAN,

It's time to get back to work—with me! On "Amadeus, Opus 2: THE SEQUEL." Of course every screenwriter in the world wants to collaborate with you on the project, but consider this: *I* play the piano. And—quite significantly—not very well. This enables me to understand the mediocrity lying at the heart of Antonio Salieri's character, motivating him to murder.

After conducting exhaustive research into the last thirty-four years of Salieri's life, I feel there are several directions we can take with the story. In the original, Salieri resents Wolfgang "Amadeus" Mozart's genius and perhaps murders him. "Amadeus, Opus 2: THE SEQUEL" finds Salieri terrorizing most of the musical greats of the Classical Period.

THE "A" LIST
Franz "Joseph" Haydn
Ludwig "van" Beethoven
Franz Schubert

THE "B" LIST
Karl "Maria" von Weber
Johann "Nepomuk" Hummel
Karl "Ditters" von Dittersdorf

(A fact I uncovered: Schubert doesn't seem to have a middle name. As part of the publicity campaign, we could hold a contest to find one for him.)

FACTS:

Wolfgang "Amadeus" Mozart died in 1791.

In 1792, Franz "Joseph" Haydn was the greatest living composer.

DRAMATIZATION:

INTERIOR NIGHT

A social gathering. Among the crowd of composers and aristocrats we see SALIERI standing with HAYDN. PRINCE ESTERHÁZY approaches them with a very attractive FEMALE SINGER.

PRINCE ESTERHÁZY
(*to woman*)
I'd like you to meet the greatest living composer of our time . . .

SALIERI steps forward expectantly.

PRINCE ESTERHÁZY
(*continuing*)
Franz "Joseph" Haydn.

This is our hook. The audience already knows that Salieri murdered Mozart in "Amadeus." Haydn had better look out!

ESTERHÁZY escorts FEMALE SINGER away. (In background, ESTERHÁZY fondles SINGER'S BREASTS. This was commonly done in the 18th century.) SALIERI turns to HAYDN.

SALIERI
(*sarcastically*)
So, "Joseph," how does it feel to be the greatest living composer?

HAYDN
(*with characteristic modesty*)
I can't claim to be the greatest living composer. Mozart is the greatest living composer, even though he's dead.

SALIERI
Mozart is *very* dead, "Joe."

HOLD on HAYDN'S reaction (alarmed, but ever polite) and CUT.

FACTS:

Ludwig "van" Beethoven was a pupil of Salieri's.

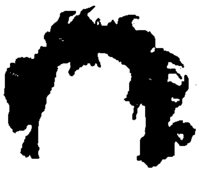
Salieri gave him composition lessons for free.

Beethoven repaid him by writing a set of variations based on the duet "La stessa, la stessissima" from Salieri's opera "Falstaff."

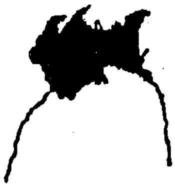
Salieri didn't go for it.

DRAMATIZATION:

We slightly alter Beethoven's haircut from what it actually was:



to



Of course this is up to the discretion of the costume designer. I strongly believe, however, that it will give a more contemporary appeal to the film, especially if we call it

"Amadeus, Opus 2: VAN."

INT. DAY

BEETHOVEN is writing a letter.

CLOSEUP LETTER

DEAR IMMORTAL BELOVED,

I'm sure Salieri is out to get me. If I go deaf, be sure to spread the rumor that he is responsible. It all has to do with a set of variations I composed on his silly duet "Stessa, stessissima." The man has no sense of humor! My improvisations are the only way anyone will remember his silly opera. . . .

PAN DOWN (over remainder of letter—enough for viewers to gather its gist: *what Beethoven would like to do to his Immortal Beloved*).

FACT:

Charles Burr writes about Schubert, "The composer was very much impressed with his master [Salieri] for a time, letting the latter's precepts even lead him into criticisms of Beethoven that were contradicted by his own later writings."

DRAMATIZATION:

Salieri poisons Schubert against Beethoven the way Mozart's purity of genius poisoned Salieri and Salieri, in turn, poisoned Mozart.

Schubert decides to poison Beethoven himself.

This gives us the chance to play off the ad campaign for "Amadeus":

". . . EVERYTHING YOU'VE HEARD IS TRUE"

with

". . . MUCH OF WHAT YOU'VE HEARD WAS NEVER WRITTEN"

Not the Ninth Symphony (includes "Ode to Joy")!
Not the Hammerklavier Sonata!
Certainly not the Missa Solemnis!

(Perhaps we should proceed on the assumption that these pieces *were* written. I leave it up to you. What do you think?)

FACT:

The Classical Period witnessed the development of Sonata-Allegro Form.

DRAMATIZATION:

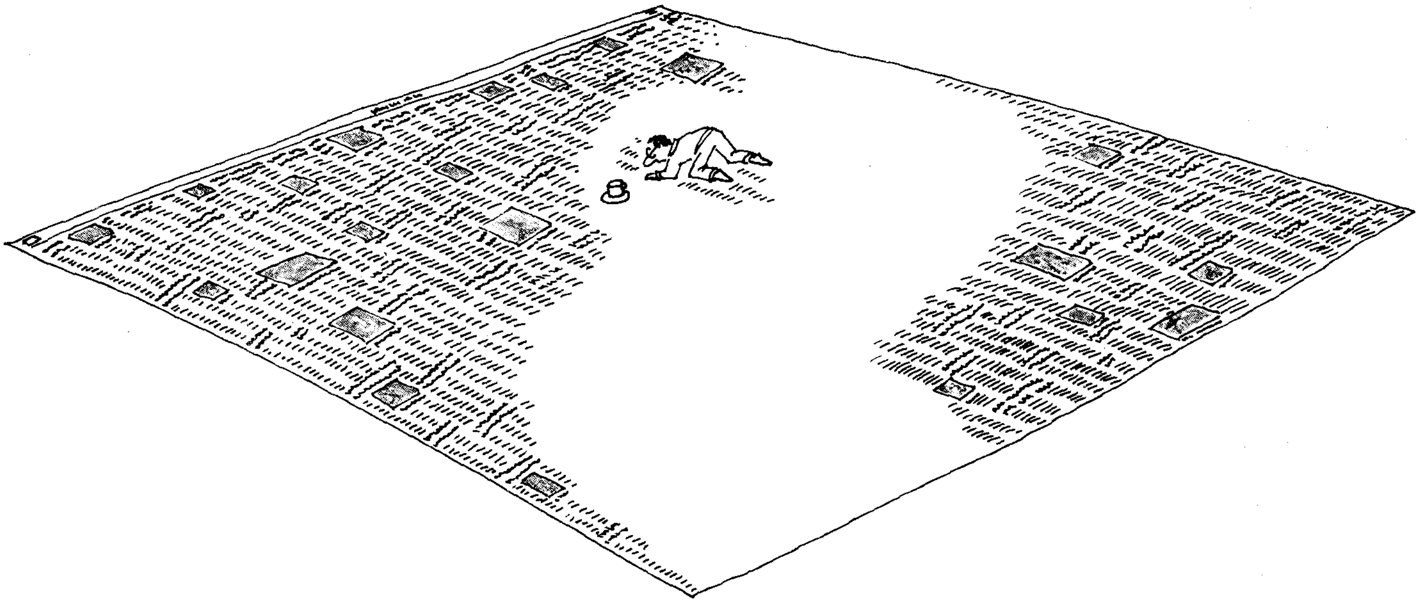
For the first third of the movie, the actors talk at a good pace and with lots of enthusiasm. We introduce the theme of Salieri's relief that Mozart is not around anymore. Then we bring in a contrasting theme: there were very few good violin concerti being written.

For the next third of the film, the actors talk very slowly and softly. (If the movie theatres have Lucasound, it is important that it be turned off.) Here is where we need a new theme. How about sex?

When everything gets really quiet . . .

INT. ASYLUM

SALIERI
(*like a bassoon*)
Beethoven walks out in the country, gets caught in a thun-



The Sunday New York Times — Single-Page Edition

• •

derstorm, sits under a tree, and the entire "Pastoral" Symphony comes to him. Haydn goes to a soirée, decides to leave, suddenly decides to stay, and realizes he has just discovered the *fausse reprise*. Thanks a lot, God, for inspiring everybody else.

SALIERI shakes a fist heavenward, then stops (remembering the other contributions to music that were going on in Europe during this period).

SALIERI
(*continuing*)
Joseph Wölfl (alt. spelling: Wölffl)! Just his name is enough to remind me of Wolfie Mozart! Carl Czerny! *He* gets to give his name to finger exercises! And why didn't I get to compose the "Gradus ad Parnassum" instead of Clementi?

Fifteen more minutes of the actors speaking sotto voce follow.

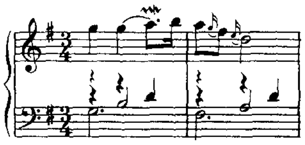
Then we're off into the last third of "Amadeus, Opus 2: THE SEQUEL," where I feel we should make use of our last theme: gratuitous violence. Everybody in any case talks as fast as they can. There should be some terrific suspense building up as to whether the actors will all finish the movie at the same time.

Oh, a word about sequels in general, Miloš:

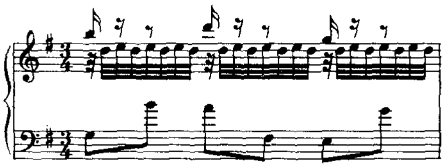
FACT:

A film sequel is like variation form in music. As Phillip Ramey has stated, "Variation is the natural remedy for the tedium of repetition."

As an example, I'd like to quote from Johann "Sebastian" Bach's Goldberg Variations. The aria



eventually becomes



etc.

Likewise, in the movie "Jaws" the shark is eating a certain number of people; by "Jaws III" the shark is eating a certain number of other people.

DRAMATIZATION:

EXT. NIGHT—WOODS

SALIERI stalks through the bushes outside a SUMMER COTTAGE.

HIS POINT OF VIEW—INT. COTTAGE.

BEETHOVEN, HAYDN, SCHUBERT, their mentor, GOETHE, and THE MEMBERS OF THE "B" LIST (depending on our shooting schedule) are anticipating the Romantic Period while taking showers.

CUT TO BUSHES. ATONAL MUSIC UP. (Even if it is the wrong century, it'll work.)

SALIERI raises his arm. Light glints menacingly off a poniard.

FACT:

Haydn died in 1809.

DRAMATIZATION:

In 1824, Salieri confesses to the murder of Haydn, and every other composer of his time. Then Salieri dies, in 1825. This is where I feel "Amadeus, Opus 2: THE SEQUEL" must end, as Beethoven died in 1827 and Schubert in 1828, and I think it's important to the integrity of the project that we be as factually accurate as possible.

FACT:

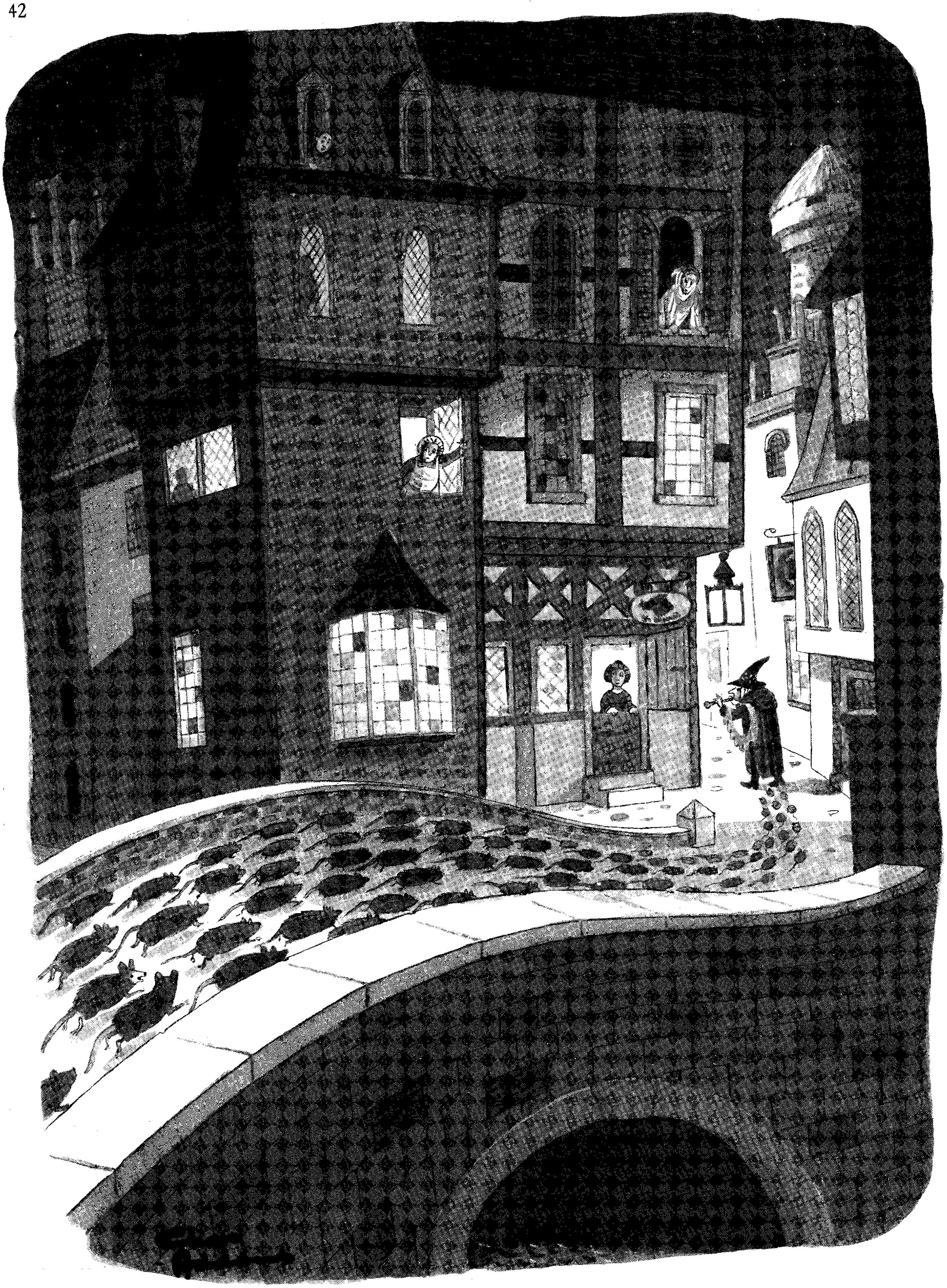
In Beethoven's Late Quartets, the spaces between the notes are as important as the notes themselves.

FACT?:

There's a rumor going around that you've contacted Harold Pinter to write this screenplay.

Please let me hear from you,

—POLLY FROST



"Whoever he is, he's got charisma."

THE WIND-CHILD FACTOR

SIX people were waiting for Bertram Wood in a Chinese restaurant in London. All dons, all learned, all men. Five vying men, one hungry man.

"I wonder why he chose a Chinese restaurant. I mean, why not Greek or Italian? As he's a classicist."

"Or a bar, as he's a lawyer. Called to the bar."

"He probably speaks Chinese. That would be it. Mandarin Chinese."

"Bertram Wood a Mandarin man? Never. He's his father's son."

"There's a new translation of Proust that has the phrase 'deliquescent mandarin' in it." No one knew how to react. "The phrase itself, *mal choisi* though it may strike our dumb ears, does express the very essence of a deliquescent mandarin. Sonically."

"Perhaps that's what the translator meant." Pause. "Or Proust. Are there any nuts?"

"Was the phrase in a Bertram Wood translation?"

"He says he's not up to Proust yet."

"He's up to anything, Bertram Wood is. Did you know he plays the harpsichord, the clavichord, the piano, and the Hammond organ?"

"In the old days there used to be prawn crackers at Chinese restaurants, but now there are only crispy noodles and I don't like crispy noodles. Do you think we could get some fortune cookies in advance?"

"Bertram Wood must get hungry, too."

"He would have that from his father. They liked cooking for each other. I once saw them at it. More in the interest of cheering each other up than because of what they called being 'ravenious.' They got through poor times together."

"The hunger wouldn't be from his father. It would be from his background in the war. The Second World War."

"Good Lord, was he alive then? His whole future still seems to lie ahead of him, though he's already achieved so much. In many fields. We should get him talking about the Goncourt brothers."

"Or tennis."

"A manifold man."

"Has anyone done anything about the Chinese fortune cookies?"

"He shares a house with his stepmother, doesn't he? Joanna Something. They live just round the corner. We could ring to see that he's on his way, but if we got her we'd have to ask her, and she'd contribute nothing."

"We'll merely have to wait."

"Doomed to wait. This is our fate. Waiting for the great."

Someone sensible groaned, and stole some leftover Chinese fortune cookies from another table.

FORTY-ODD years ago, Bertram was already being similarly harassed. When he was ten or so, he was asked by a red-nosed but spiritual-looking Sunday-school mistress, "And what is your thought?"

"It is in the matter of God that thought has given me most disappointment," he said.

The Sunday-school mistress held the top of her nose between her right thumb and middle finger.

"Are you going to sneeze?" said Bertram.

His best friend, Sam, kicked him, because everyone else at the Scripture class could see that she was furious. She wore an old gray cardigan that affronted the boys by its lack of fastidiousness, and gray stockings that had a red ink stain on one of them. The girls in the class bet every day on which leg would be bearing the red-ink-stained stocking, suspecting that she went to bed in her clothing.

"Have you got a cold?" said Sam. The children were not joking. Sympathy for the woman ran through the class like a wave through sand, now that her embarrassing attempts to force them to act out the Book of Ruth among the desks had been laid to rest.

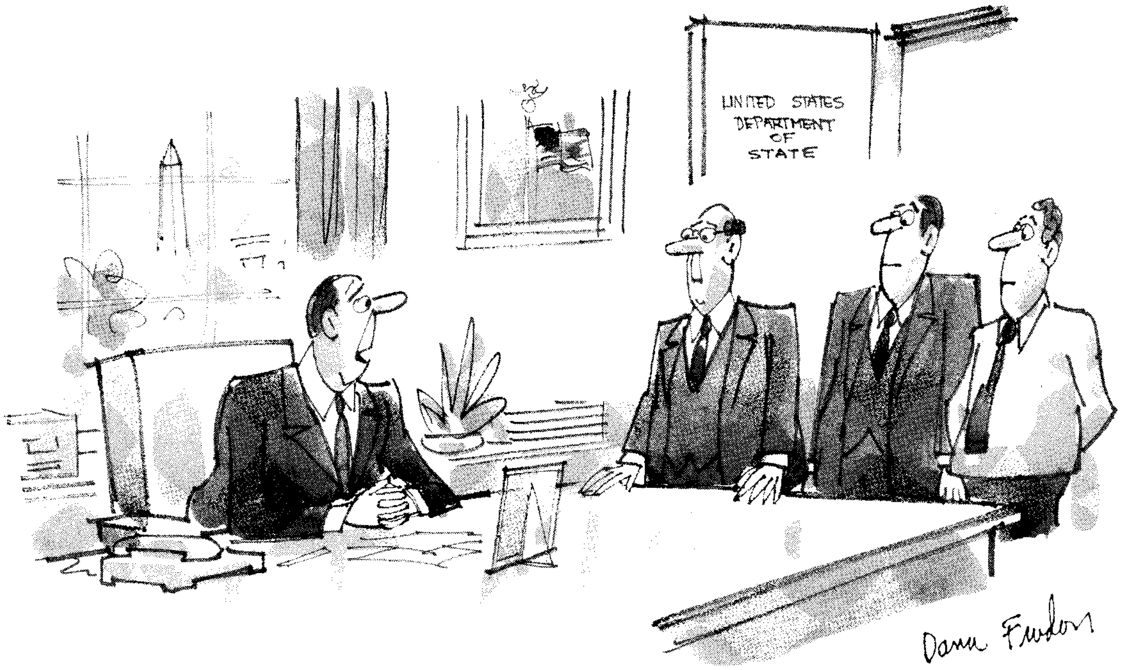
"I'm holding the right thought," said the Sunday-school mistress.

"It's your nose, though," said Bertram. "Have a peppermint."

"Peppermints help colds," said Sam, a loyal trooper, pursuing his friend's foiled try at peace.

"Peppermints better *hinder* than help colds," said the Sunday-school mistress, and the children took their elbows off the tables. The class had more feeling for her when she was pedantic than when she was vague. So she tried a question. "Perhaps peppermints better hinder than help colds? That would be what you mean?"

Bertram held on to the possibility of her charity, because he had to go to the dentist the next day. The dentist was known as being "good with children," and Bertram was to have all his baby molars out. He counted them before he left the house the next morning. Eight to go. He went on his bicy-


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Dana Fradon

"Gentlemen, we have a problem. We've learned that one of our sincere negotiators in Geneva is insincere."

TERMS

Holidays, books, and lives draw to their close,
The curtain rings down on some theatre piece,
The brass, string, and percussion sections close
In on their tonic and concordant close
When all loose ends infallibly are tied
Into baroque or plain completion. Close
Your eyes, and a childhood landscape wades in close
With delicate birch to supplant the frank disgrace
Of our littoral, littered world, as painters grace
A woman's grief, a beggar's bowl with close,
Clear scrutiny until a world has grown
Out of Rembrandt's pain and a narrow ghetto's groan.

Open your eyes. A body of water has grown
Obsidian, slick, and ballroom-smooth. Look close
And, through a wind's light pucker, mark full-grown
Migrations of clouds, to which small fish have grown
Accustomed, which they inhabit, all of a piece
With their rock-bottom skies. And now the grown
Wind-wrinkles, the mackerel heavens, with their ingrown
Pisces and constellated summertide
Calm for an instant, arresting the whole tide
Of time, like ants in amber, momently grown
Changeless and still as painting, fluttering grace
Notes that are held in mind by an act of grace.

The young are full of an astonishing grace,
Soft-eyed, trustful, and lithe till they have grown
Aware of being admired for their grace,
Whereupon they go through some fall from grace,
An aging that reminds us of our close.
The skater's tilt, the contemplator's grace
Are both a selflessness, evincing grace
In agile tension as well as mastered peace,
In a poise of speed or stillness. But our last peace,
Stone-capped, dark-rooted, engraved, and void of grace,
Beds down in rain and rubble, and eventide
Sees us unsinewed, our last lank strands untied.

What do those distant thunderheads betide?
Nothing to do with us. Not our disgrace
That the raped corpse of a fourteen-year-old, tied
With friction tape, is found in a ditch, and a tide
Of violent crime breaks out. Yet the world grown
Wrathful, corrupt, once loosed a true flood tide
That inched inside the wards where the frail are tied
To their beds, invaded attics, climbed to disclose
Sharks in the nurseries, eels on the floors, to close
Over lives and cries and herds, and on that tide,
Which splintered barn, cottage, and city piece-
Meal, one sole family rode the world to peace.

Think of the glittering morning when God's peace
Flooded the heavens as it withdrew the tide:
Sweet grasses, endless fields of such rich peace
That for long after, when men dreamed of peace,
It seemed a place where beast and human grace
A pastoral landscape, a Virgilian peace,
Or scene such as Mantegna's masterpiece
Of kneeling shepherds. But that dream has grown
Threadbare, improbable, and our paupers groan
While "stockpiled warheads guarantee our peace,"
And troops, red-handed, muscle in for the close.
Ours is a wound that bleeds and will not close.

Long since we had been cautioned: "Until he close
His eyes forever, mildly and in peace,
Call no man fortunate." Our need of grace
Grows ominously, a malign, ingrown
Melanoma, softly spreading its dark tide.

—ANTHONY HECHT

• •

cle, preferring to make his own way.

"Do you like this new Teddy bear?" said the dentist, Mr. Powell. "For children younger than you, of course."

Bertram handed him an envelope with a letter inside. "My parents said I haven't got to have an anesthetic." The letter read:

DEAR MR. POWELL,
Bertram our son does not have to have an anesthetic. He went black under your last anesthetic.
Yours affectionately,
MR. WOOD

The dentist said, "Why don't you like anesthetics?"

"Ever since the last go your chair has made me think of when I was unconscious." He paused. "If a thing's there, you don't like it to remind you of when your mind was dead to the world. Beds do it too. For a thing to remind a person of being unconscious! Beds are a waste of room space."

"Do you want a throat lozenge?"

"No thank you. I like that pink warm water, though. I'd like some more."

"Not too much."

While the dentist was turned away to his instrument table, Bertram gave the Teddy bear to the nurse.

"Have you got a name for him?" she said.

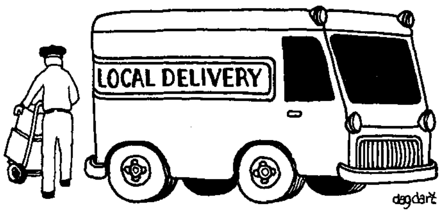
"Yes."

"What is it? We'll put a label on his back."

"Exit."

"I think Felix would be nicer. Felix means happy."

"That's O.K. He's the surgery's Teddy bear, so his name's up to the surgery. Everyone grown up seems very happy, considering it's the war. Did Sunday schools and dentists stay behind as a war duty to cheer everyone up? I expect that was it."



"Only a tiny stab," said the dentist, turning round.

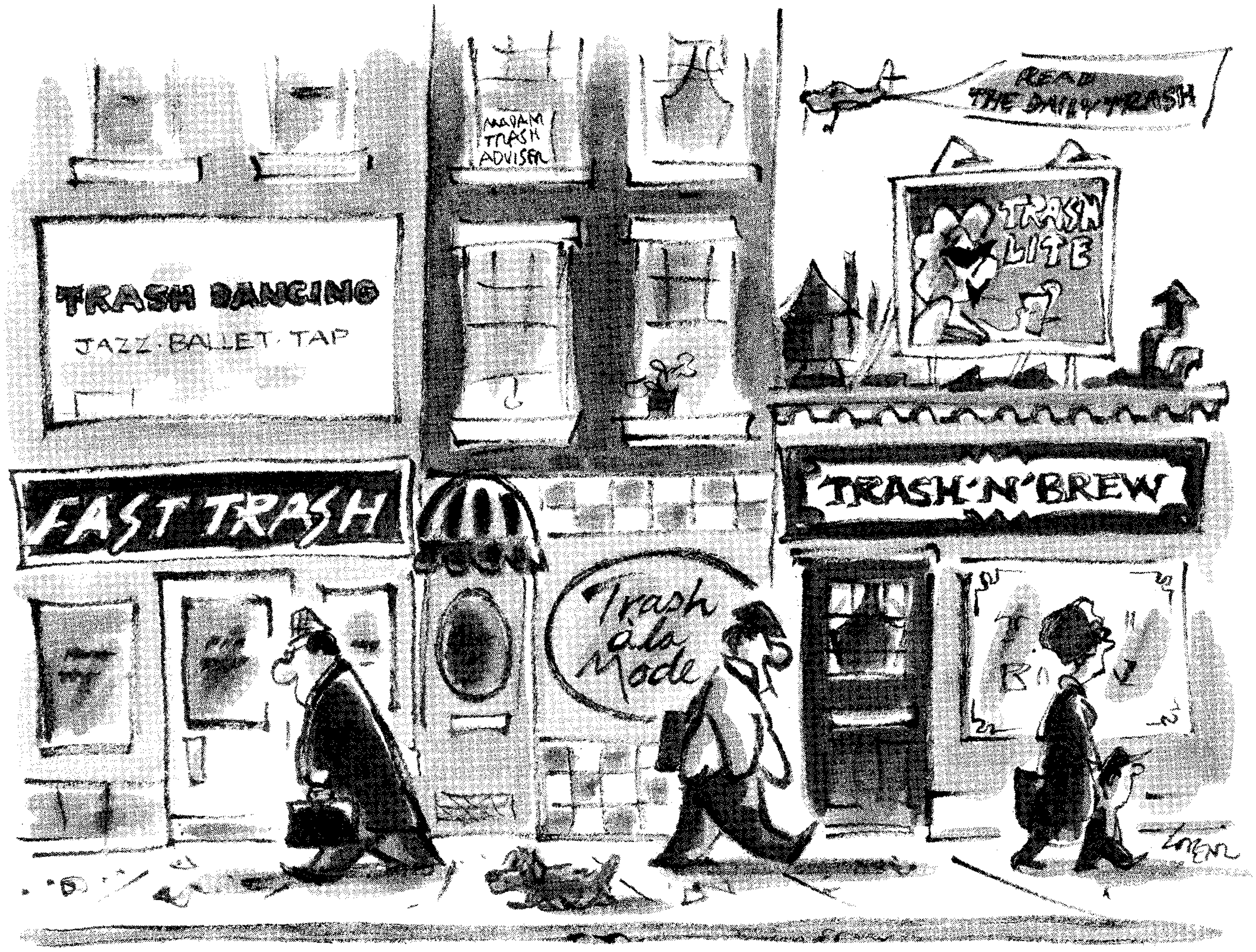
"No, just pull them out," said Bertram. "It's only eight of them."

"It depends what we find."

"We? It's you looking. And pulling. So pull. Please."

"Well, old boy, a few hard yanks and we're done. It's a bit like the planning of a shipyard's work. We've got to get the little frigates out of the way to make room for the big battleships."

The dentistry was done without the afterpain of an apparently broken jaw which Bertram had gone through at earlier sessions for a mere filling. Mr. Powell took the Teddy bear from the nurse's desk and propped it on the mantelpiece. "Look at him," he said. "There he is, watching us and saying what a fuss about nothing."



THE GOLDEN AGE OF TRASH

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Bertram shook the dentist's hand. "I hope the other teeth today are more interesting," he said. "Could I have my lot, please?"

"Why?"

"I'd just quite like them. They're more mine than anybody else's."

"My regards to your mother."

"She's not back from fire duty yet. She's got you down for Tuesday."

"I should go home if I were you. Rinse with salt water, warm, to stop the bleeding."

"I'm not allowed to be there alone, because of the bombs. I'll have to go to school. Smithereens, that means another letter, saying why I'm late."

The nurse rapidly typed him a note and gave it to the dentist to sign. Bertram sighed, the heavy sigh of a child's relief. "That's one thing done."

AFTER the war, Bertram went to Edinburgh University and read mathematics and English on a scholarship. His father, Bernard, visited him there once and asked, "Why can't you ever decide what you want to be?"

"I've always decided. I've always wanted to read books in as many languages as possible and to think about them. And to write things down. Though I'm more interested in mathematics. It's not a *cover*. It's perfectly possible to believe in two things. You do, in fact. Much more than two. You do masses of things at once. You still love Mama, and you love your second wife."

"Joanna."

"Yes, but you've only told me about her so far."

Bernard Wood sucked his pipe. "She's tall and gentle, and unfortunately she keeps very long hours. Last week she'd been working till two in the morning and rang me on the intercom at four from the sofa, because she didn't want to wake me, and said she couldn't go to sleep."

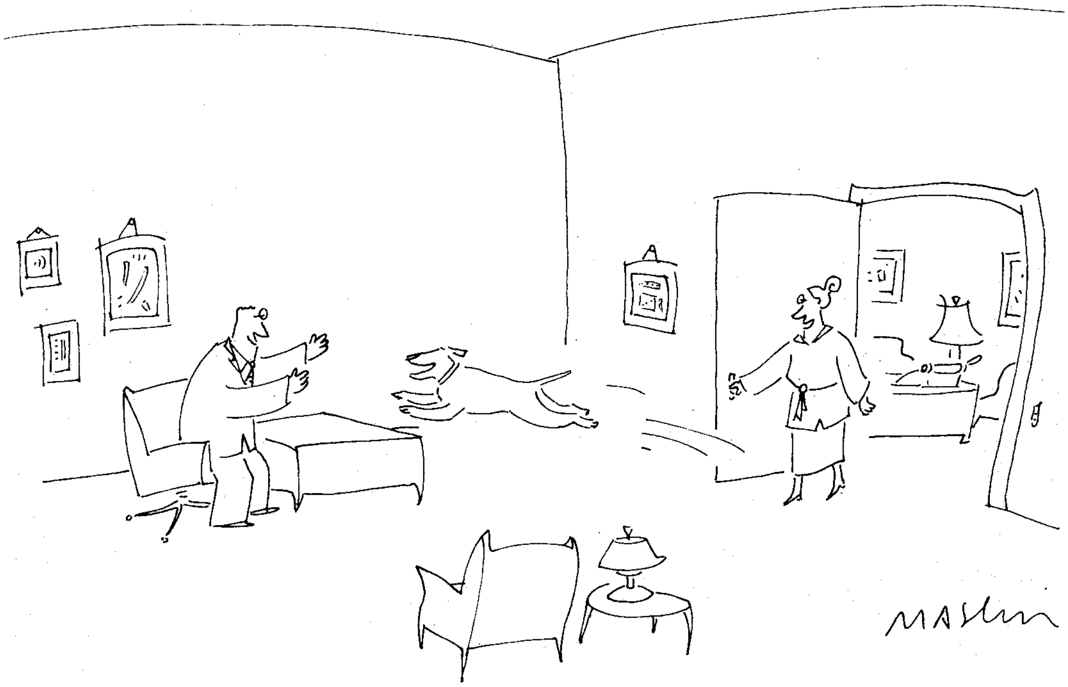
"She rang you because she didn't want to wake you," Bertram repeated, not as a question.

"Well, I'm sure it would have been after a very long time of hesitancy. I'd heard her walking about and boiling kettles. Boiling hot water in kettles, I should have said."

"Except that nobody else does. Nobody else, nobody else in the world, would have corrected himself about that except you. So what did you say?"

"I wanted her to come upstairs, but she thought she'd be sleepless. Her bitterness all lay against the sofa. I could see no reason in it, none at all. I asked if she'd tried lying down, and she laughed and said she hadn't thought of it. So then the house grew quiet and I came down and went to sleep next to her, though there was not much room for the dog. The dog serving as a bolster, these being chaste circumstances."

Bernard started to cook crumpets,



"He said it was urgent."

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which he painted with the whalemeat oil that his son kept in an old paint tin. "This tin is sterilized, is it?" he said softly, as if unassimilable other lives hostile to mankind and inhabiting tins might hear him.

"Boiled and boiled."

"Whalemeat oil! It seems a lifetime we've had of it. Holding out promise of sirloin and then letting you down into brisling at best."

Bernard and Bertram dug into two crumpets each. Bernard said, "For some of us, different things take a different long time. Will you promise me something?"

"You asked me that impossible question when I was nine, and I said yes, because I thought you were going to ask me to promise not to smoke or drink before I was twenty-one, and then you made me promise not to marry a lady cellist from Budapest. Not a particular lady cellist, any lady cellist. From Budapest."

"Well, you didn't," said Bernard with satisfaction, "and look how well the abstention has worked out. Oh, yes, this other promise. Will you promise me something?"

"Of course."

"Will you promise me not to become a constitutional statesman?"

"Immediately. Why?"

"I've been thinking about it and the dangers for you in general, with your mind and the world's courting of it, and you must remember Bagehot was right."

"Walter Bagehot."

"Walter Bagehot. His prescription for a constitutional statesman was that it needed the powers of a first-rate mind united to the creed of a second-rate man. I passionately, quite passionately, believe that you would be incapable of a second-rate creed but you might think it necessary on behalf of our benighted planet."

"You once said to me, after you'd taken me out to the Proms the night I'd had all those teeth out, and you'd lent me one of those beautiful linen handkerchiefs, which I'd probably ruined for life—well, you said that the value of life lay in behaving decently in indecent circumstances. As we were at the echo part of Albert Hall, and as it was the Mozart Requiem, I obviously didn't blub, but the occasion struck me. I mean the handkerchief, the teeth, the war, the Mozart Requiem," and then he added, "fathers."

Bernard said to Bertram, lightly, "I was extremely aware of you that night."

So their minds came together, and the evening long ago, well remembered, and withstood, became prodigal.

"Whalemeat oil makes me remember chocolate mess," said the father. "You made it for me one night when you'd heard me rattling the bread bin."

"When I was cooking for you. Mama had skedaddled."

"Not skedaddled. I'm afraid I was too much for her, or too little. I've never known which. I miss her, don't you know. And certainly you do. Do you happen to remember the recipe?"

"It was your idea," said Bertram, loving his father's grave oddities. He had admired them all his life and, believing himself in lack, thought himself a dullard.

Bernard dipped two slices of bread into milk, and melted a mixture of whalemeat oil and butter in a frying pan ("Butter!" muttered both, separately), coated one side with unsweetened cocoa and sugar, fried the bread slices coated side down, coated the other side, turned them over, wheedled them out of the frying pan. The crusts had to be hard, but not as hard as toffee, and the rest coated with fudge but a little soft inside. The mess was perfect. The two men, both normally orderly and horrified by disarray, ate seriously with knife and fork in front of the university gas fire and found justice in their memories of triumphs over restriction.

At dawn the next morning, Bernard was asleep in the digs his son had found him, and Bertram in his rooms reading. There was a din like an incendiary bomb going off. Bertram ran in the direction of the noise of the fire engines. A house behind the Castle Mound, next door to his father's digs, had been blown up, sliced with such neatness that a staircase cantilevered from its side was still hanging in place and the wallpaper still mostly intact in the houses beside it. There were rumors of sabotage, of course—by the I.R.A., by Scottish Nationalists—but the cause was a gas explosion from the mains where someone had been digging a repair hole and had left the supply lines open overnight without a thought. The fire engines' hoses were pouring water onto flames belching out of a house to the right. To the left, the house with the clutching staircase. Where was Bernard?

After a silence, things were said fast by onlookers gathering.

"Supposing it had been the Queen," said a woman in a tweed coat over a nightdress.

"She's at Balmoral," said a landlady who knew about royalty.

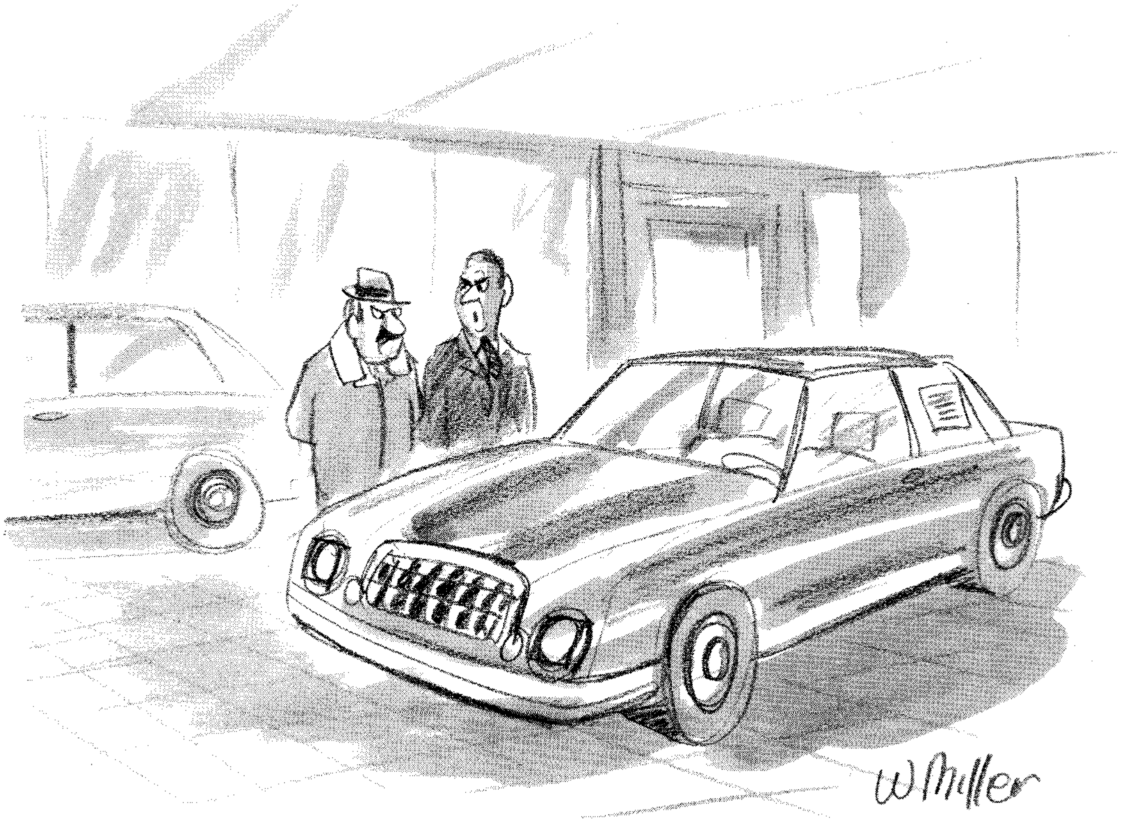
"Who cares?" said a small fourteen-year-old in clogs with a slash of lipstick on her face and an Our Dumb Friends' League badge in her fake tiara.

"Don't you want to be taken home, darling?" said a lady from the North British Hotel in an ambassadorial way. "Bedtime?"

"I'm a wee whore," said the child firmly, turning her back on callowness.

A *gas* leak. Bertram, as near damnable fear as he had ever been, kept thinking of his own gas fire and the joy of chocolate mess as he hunted through the rubble. In the end he simply climbed the stairs, now swinging, and put his shoulder against the second-floor wall of the left-hand house, recently built and not of Edinburgh stone. Face covered with chalk, he burst into a room, where he found his father reciting "Alice in Wonderland" over and over again. And a woman, tall, gentle, wounded by fire in one hand, who could only be Joanna.

"You're Bertram," she said. "Your father's chest was hit by a falling timber." The room was chaotic. Rubble everywhere. Surprising things remained. Looking glasses, a rickety mock-Sheraton table, the basin, the pretty water jar and washbowl. Bernard's spectacles were broken but in the frame only, and Joanna was holding them together in her unwounded hand as though she were herself a piece of mending tape for them.



"Well, no, we don't go crashing our cars into concrete walls just to prove something, but that doesn't mean they're not good cars."

" ' "I can't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see." "I don't see," said the Caterpillar,' " Bernard said abruptly.

"Joanna," said Bertram. "He's bad?"

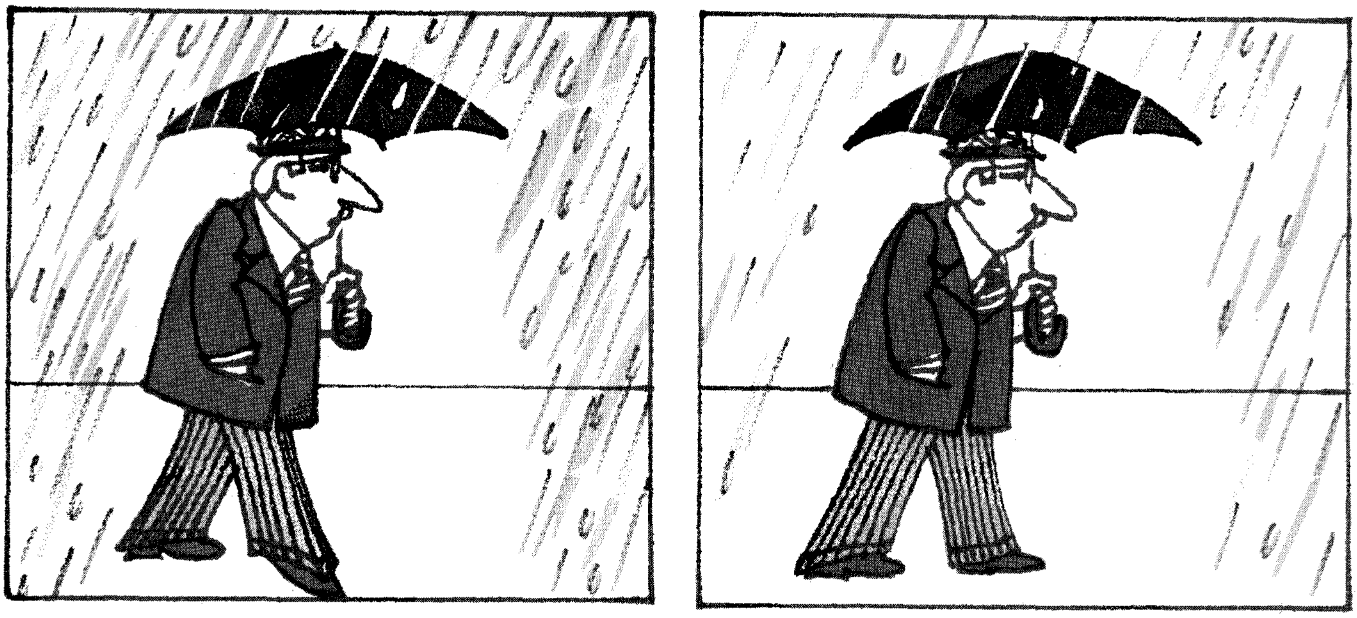
"A falling beam, an architrave, did something," she said, steadying herself.

" ' "Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice very earnestly.' "

"What are you talking about, Father?" said Bertram, level.

"Books in danger, you see," said Bernard. "Always the first to go. We have to depend on our memories. From now on. Don't thieve Joanna from me, will you, Bertram? I realize I'd only be paying my dues—for what I did to your mother, I mean—but I'd prefer that you didn't, if possible." He lay quietly, stopping breathing, and they covered his face, and then carried him downstairs gently. He was as light as a pile of newly washed linen; in the end Joanna held him across her own two arms. It seemed well. Bertram took over in the road, and they went back to his rooms and sat awake till dawn, remembering what they could of "Alice": Bertram not surmising why Joanna had been there all the time, both not surmising why Lewis Carroll, of all people, should be the writer Bernard chose to commit to the memory of the planet he would be buried in.

In years to come, Joanna, now mother of a grown daughter, grew even more fond of Bertram, and he of her. They saw him as the executor and custodian of his father's mind as well as of his own. More than ever alert against disorder, he added width to his knowledge of common law and became the past's investigative reporter—a self-appointed recorder of the causes of the Peninsular Wars, the Crimean War, and onward to the Jarrow Marches—and then a man of letters and a favored pronouncer on the theatre's history. He was hard to cajole into speaking, preferring to write, though he found this stingy of himself. So sometimes he enforced putting his voice on a tape recorder, finding in this an aching link with his father's effort to imprint literature's past on some tabloid not defaceable by such a negligent catastrophe as a perilous gas leak. In the theatre, as his father had, he found lucidity in the economical,



and he found warmth in Middle English's lack of clutter.

AND so now overcourted. Hell's bells. He remained, always, decorous. To a woman interviewing him—Annie Jenks, a journalist honored in Grub Street for her early cynicism—he recited a bit of Chaucer and then went on to say, "And the necessities. How much is it essential to put on the stage to convey a narrative about a forest?"

"If it's a Birnam Wood on the move, that's comic whatever you do," said Annie Jenks.

"Well," said Bertram, steady on his course, "the question—I think it was Edward Craig's originally—suddenly explodes the myth that it is necessary to show a tree with all its branches and all its leaves. And in a way Brecht takes that idea and links it to an actor. In a time-honored way actors still do characters in the round, and it's very English to be so hidebound by honor." Bertram pushed on. "I can only say that the theatre, and I am a pretty rotten playwright so far, so far, is apart from other arts because of its constant relationship to an audience. Where else do we get the ferocity and fear that a medieval audience got from their religion? And where do we find the gentleness?" He jingled the house telephone for Joanna, but the house telephone was not even a house tapper and hadn't worked for many a long year.

"Where do we find the gentleness?" he said again. "On the one side, I'm the individual who thinks it's hopeless to try to change society, that we can't do anything, and that it's just like Hell anyhow. Whatever we do is just doomed to be a disaster. That's the point of Sade in the French Revolution. Sade is the sort of cruel visionary we find in Stalin. In the things Marat says of him."

"Who's Marat? Oh, Marat/Sade," said Annie Jenks. She waved a pen full of the ink of insight. "One person, really."

Bertram bent his head to her keenly. "That's an interesting idea, theatrically. And as to the actors, and the writers, more important—well, I saw something last night at a run-through, and it was quite lovely for young people, but I'm worried about the substance. Though there was no contriving, and great compassion."

"We could talk about 'Finnegans Wake,' " said Miss Jenks.

"In a moment. Now, this play. The life itself lightens the interior. You couldn't read it. It's not like a play. It's a piece about two young people coping with puberty, God what a word, and the girl brought something chaste to it. She had stagefright the first time. It's funny, because they're being tutored by a sex therapist, and it's all so lonely. There's a sadness. It would be there in farce. Here they're young and they don't know it. If one were able to go beyond that room the author's created, there'd be something small and gleaming. I can see it, but it would need a lot of work. Are you interested in replies? To technical problems?"

"One's got to stay focussed. I'm a born questioner."

"How strange. I should have thought of you as a born answerer. Though you could change that, of course."

"You'd throw in the sponge, wouldn't you?"

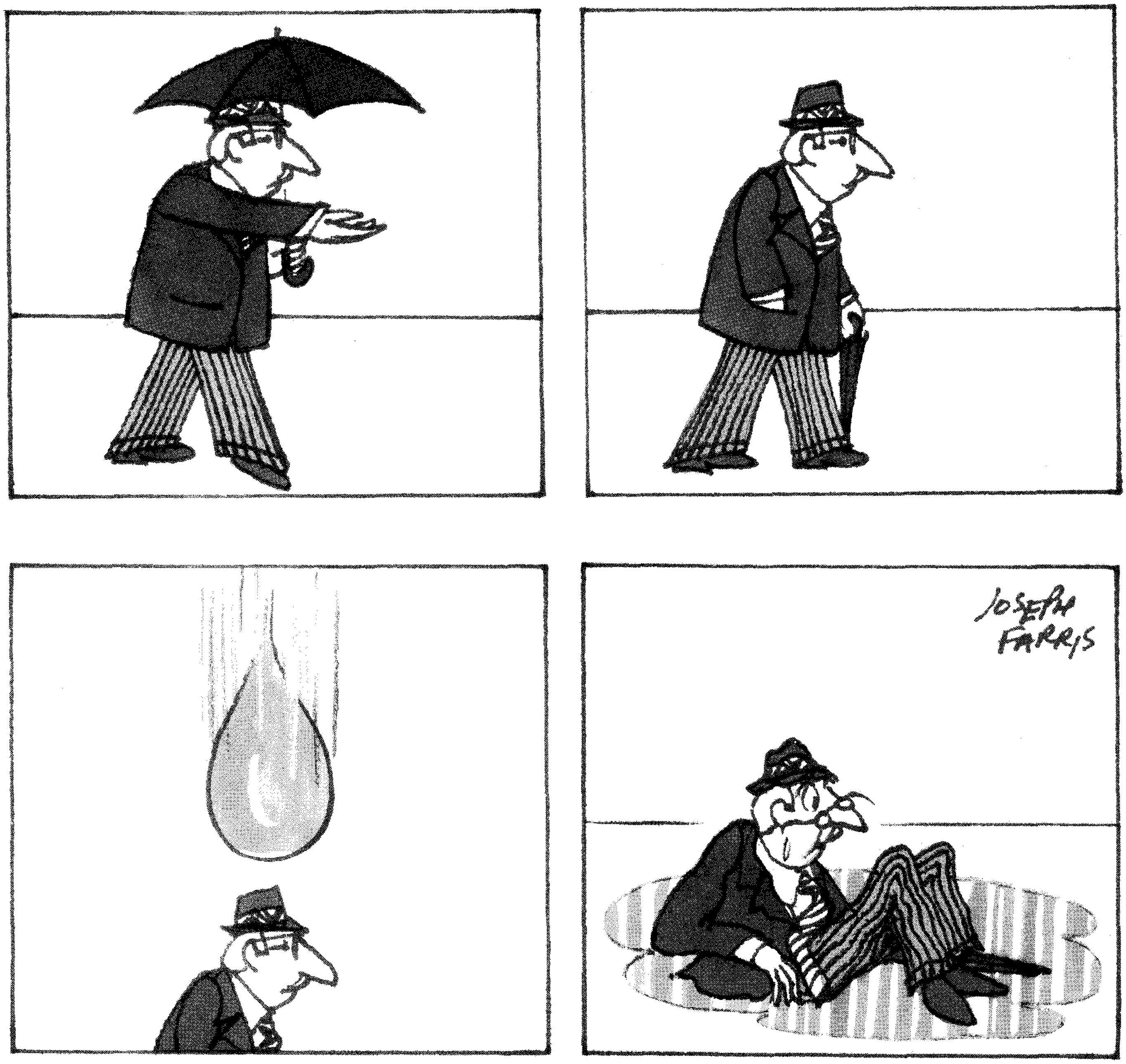
"Only about, I think, laundry tickets. The fear of losing them. Unclaimed shirts in Chinese laundries all over the world."

"Would you talk about the Brontë sisters?"

"Well, everything is soluble unless it's impossible, but wouldn't it be better to talk about the theatre, because you might get more out of me?"

Annie Jenks put her feet on the arm of his sofa, taking notes in the pad on her knees, and said bracingly, "All right."

Alarmed, he walked about the room for a time and then spoke for half an hour, mostly to himself, about Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko (it turned out that the growingly pretty Annie Jenks had a degree in Russian), about swimming pools. "I once was in a swimming pool that had been drained and I thought this would be a way to stage Sartre, to stop him sounding like a playwright to be read from a podium, for here we have it—in the emptied pool we have our exaggerated rake, an eccentric element missing that would make thought buoyant—and if we were to put duckboard over the emptied pool and do one play on that we would have a resonance very much like the resonance of doing any play with echoes of the past by being heard through the present. You have to wreck the formality of a stage and then order it again according to the play. In the theatre you can do any-



thing. In films, too. It's only in England and America that films are so hidebound by naturalism. Think of the wonderful scene in Wajda when Cybulski is rushing from the enemy Poles and gets caught in lines of damp laundry—sheets, pillowcases—and he can't find his way in all this waterlogged cleanness: it fills his ears as if he were underwater. It's terrifying and comic and pathetic, with all the trim hounds of Hell after him and his own bulk beating its way through housewifery. It's like having a perforated eardrum. Everything in the skull. Would you like to come out to dinner? I'm supposed to be at a Chinese restaurant in twenty minutes."

"Would that be all right?" said Annie Jenks, looking at her face in a powder compact. "We haven't got to the Brontë sisters yet."

"No, but I'm not sure I'm up to them."

"As the most famous belletrist and, of course, devotee of women's capacities, particularly when they occur in female siblings—"

Bertram had his head in a cupboard. "I was looking for an umbrella for you."

Annie said, "The forecast said there was going to be a wind-chill factor."

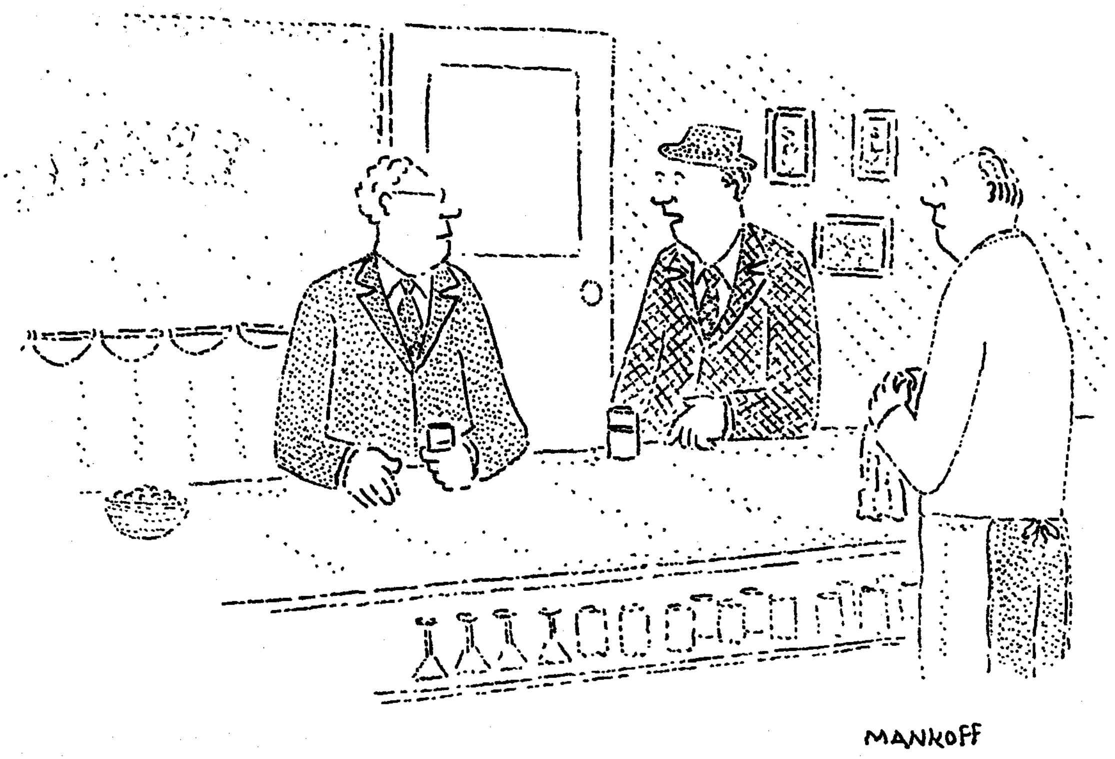
"In spring?"

"Well, actually I heard it from a Jamaican taxi-driv[illegible] said there was going t[illegible] factor."

"Yes, much better," said Bertram from the cupboard. "I like that idea very much. Now, all these old tennis racquets. Pluck one and it's like an untuned harpsichord. Considering the damp in here, you'd think an instrument, or racquet, would find the circumstances ideal." He plucked some more tennis strings. "A very soggy arpeggio."

Annie again tried to get him to talk about the Brontës, about Sappho, about George Eliot, but nothing came of it. In the taxi she gave up.

THE six dons waiting at the Chinese restaurant all had their notebooks out. Bertram went to a telephone and rang Joanna, just around



"I'm a citizen of the world, but I'm based in Bayonne."

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the corner. Then he fell into a happy silence, ate fried rice and duck delicately flavored with tea leaves, passed dishes, listened to the others. Most of the people seemed wary of Annie Jenks, and he acted protectively toward her. He spoke of the weather, but the table at large wanted him to talk about "Middlemarch." He asked them about the book's own questions instead, which were not what anyone wanted.

A pall. Joanna came. Things lifted. "Is there anything you want to talk about?" she said.

Bertram said immediately, "My fingers are itching about parking at the moment."

"Secretary of the linguistic philosopher?" said a brave don, plowing into mustard sauce for strength. "I can't quite put my finger on him. On Parking. It was a him, wasn't it? The secretary."

"No, plain parking. Parking in the street is absolutely abysmally done these days. When I walk up a road, I try every car door I can to see if I can correct things by push and pull and a little wheel-turning, but most of the maneuvering done is beyond repair. A foot away from the curb, the front wheels desperately every which way. Two yards in front and two yards behind each car. Drivers who've obviously parked front wheels foremost. The lack of *thought*. Manually, where's the dexterity? Just a modicum. But it's so easy. Well, you long to put it right, don't you? There are streets I hardly dare to go down for the worry they would cause any decent parker."

"This is a new side of you," said an acolyte.

"Oh, no. I'm sure everyone has it. Everyone at this table. I spend a fortune on taxis or, if alone, I walk, because I happen to be quite a good parker myself and I know that if I had my very ancient Alvis under my belt, so to speak, which is no cinch to park and definitely lacking in a good turning circle, I should get distressed and try to push badly parked cars into better positions. Which would be bad for the mind. A one-up thing to do, wouldn't you say?"

"You wouldn't think he was writing three volumes about the Goncourt brothers," said someone at the table. The don sitting next to him said, "Not to speak of Balzac."

Bertram heard this and said, "You mean I'm accomplishing nothing at a single stroke." The table laughed, and grimaces denied the statement. "It's not that I'm not deeply interested in Balzac, but I'd rather try to write what I think than to speak it. A particularly curious woman whose mind interested me a good deal once said to me, 'How can I tell what I think until I hear what I say?' At first I thought it was featherbrained, then I thought there was more to it. As to parking, I can speak freely here, because I feel very strongly and have spent a good many years in contemplation of the problem. The disarray one sees in so many streets could so easily be put right by a little more attention. Or if I had the ignition keys. One simply pines to get things straight, doesn't one? This is one field that would yield to negotiation."

"The owners of the cars might be furious," said Annie Jenks.

"Oh, do you think so? No, I feel sure they'd be grateful, if they noticed at all."

"Balzac expert and pensive parker," said one of the dons, with indifference.

"No, not pensive," said Bertram with passion. "It takes very little thought, don't you see. I just have to be sure that the urge doesn't get the better of me. I could tell you some streets where the parking is well above average, and those are perfectly safe. Well, now, I'm very eager to hear what you all think of the Goncourts."

—PENELOPE GILLIATT

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WHAT PAPER D'YA READ?

What remained to be seen, however, was how Mr. Gorbachev (pronounced gore-bah-CHAWFF) would translate his impatience into action by the enormous bureaucracy that manages the Soviet Union's ponderous, creaky, centralized economy.
—*The Times.*

Gorbachev (pronounced Gor-BAH-chof) is regarded as a technocrat, a modernizer who can be expected to make changes designed to improve the performance of the Soviet economy and to modify the all-pervasive role of government in the agricultural sector.—*Los Angeles Times, same day.*

ANNALS OF FINANCE

FUNNY MONEY—I

THE auctioneer had a full beard and a self-confident rat-a-tat palaver and he wore a three-piece powder-blue suit. At first, the powder-blue suit threw me, because I had expected a more sombre style, something closer to the hues of a funeral director, but then I realized that, next to the dean of the bankruptcy bar, the auctioneer was probably the most light-spirited workingman in town. Once the prices of crude oil and natural gas broke, life began to settle down to where it belonged, and the auction business thrived: deep rigs, workover rigs, rig-up trucks, lowboy trailers, derrick trailers, forklifts, heat treaters, separators, compressors, cranes, welders, graders, mixers, dumpers, crushers, chains, boomers, blocks, floats, frac tanks, pickups, jets, choppers, quarter horses, polo ponies, thoroughbreds, lithographs—they were all for sale.

This one was an automobile auction, and these were not just anybody's cars. "Everyone except the members of the news media behind the ropes," the auctioneer commanded. He introduced himself as Donovan Arterburn, Jr. No need to spend a lot of time on a formal introduction of the merchandise. I did not intend to bid on any of it, nor did most of the three or four thousand other people who had turned out, but we knew why we were there. Most of us intended to elbow as close as possible to the rope barricades and gawk at what used to be the corporate fleet of the Penn Square Bank, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Two long rows of vehicles—forty-six late-model passenger cars and one three-wheeled utility truck—faced each other, ten yards apart. Hours earlier, the hoods had been raised for anyone who wanted to view the innards, but now they were closed and the bid spotters and security guards had ushered us away.

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which is a branch of the Department of the Treasury, determines when a national bank has failed. On July 5, 1982, the Comptroller declared the Penn Square Bank insolvent, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation moved in immediately to settle the bank's affairs. According to the Comptroller, the Penn Square Bank owned a portfolio of uncollectible loans whose face value exceeded the bank's capital: too many of the bank's customers had borrowed more money than they could ever repay; liabilities considerably surpassed assets; the bank was bankrupt. Two months into the liquidation, the automobile auction took place. The bank building stood about three hundred yards due east, tucked into a corner of the Penn Square shopping center, and the F.D.I.C. auditors toiled there right now, sifting for clues. The auditors believed that the bank had designed its own demise. The bank's owners, employees, customers, and admirers were convinced that liquidating the bank was a mistake. Whatever the case, Donovan Arterburn, Jr., had come to sell the cars.

Holding the auction in the Penn Square parking lot made good sense. It was not a puny parking lot. One of the newer shopping malls, farther north into the suburbs, had a larger lot, but the one at Penn Square could handle a sizable crowd. And, after all, these had been the bank's cars. Announcements in the newspapers had said that the auction would get under way at seven o'clock in the evening. Ever since the previous morning, when the cars had begun arriving, pensioners in knit shirts and straw fedoras—men with some time to kill while their wives canvassed the mall—had been dropping by, irritating the armed guards with the same questions, questions that the guards did not have answers to and would not have answered even if they had known the facts.

"Which of these cars did Jennings drive?" the men in the summer fedoras wanted to know. "Which one was Patterson's?" Bill P. Jennings had been the chairman of the board and the largest stockholder of the Penn Square Bank, and William G. Patterson, his protégé, had been the head of the bank's oil-and-gas-lending department. It had taken Jennings, Patterson, and the bank's employees less than three years to book almost two and a half billion dollars in oil-and-gas loans—three exhilarating years, which brought to Oklahoma more out-of-towners in quest of profit than anything else since the land rush of '89. If not for Bill Jennings and Bill Patterson, there would not have been an auction. All of us rubberneckers out for a free show appreciated that.

Frequently, the Oklahoma City cognoscenti described the scuttlebutt they fed one another as "just street talk." That phrase always aroused my skepticism, because I knew that in Oklahoma City a pedestrian was a person in transit to or from his automobile. I had picked up some street talk to the effect that Patterson drove a sea-green Porsche and Jennings was chauffeured in an oyster-white Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. Or perhaps I had heard something completely different. Keeping rumors straight was a task. In any event, I could look over the parking lot and see that there were no Porsches or Rollses for sale. There were some decent Lincoln Town Cars, a Continental, a Cadillac, plenty of smooth-riding Ford and General Motors sedans loaded with options like cruise control, tilt steering wheels, FM with the AM, a few tape decks and C.B.s, but nothing truly ostentatious.

AS big little cities go, Oklahoma City has some imperfections. During the nineteen-sixties, the downtown business center was subjected to an urban-renewal blitz that eliminated whatever looked uncontemporary. After the bulldozers had finished their work, it became evident that no one had given much thought to what might replace the old structures. Ever since, lifeless architecture has flourished. You do not see many human beings at street level, because most of the buildings are connected by a network of air-conditioned pedestrian tunnels. Summer usually lasts five punitive months. On hazy days, all of downtown threatens to disappear. A six-lane piece of east-west interstate forms a southern pe-

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"Ooooooh, just what I wanted!"

• •

rimeter that can deposit you in the business district, unless you prefer to keep driving until you hit Fort Smith or Amarillo. Fighting the brain-fogging heat, you pass the oil-field supply yards, heavy-metal industrial sprawl, idle pumping units, stacked rigs, gizmoid billboards. When the wind comes in from the south, it carries the aroma of stockyards beyond the North Canadian River. The road surface elevates as downtown presents itself—a canned silhouette of undifferentiated boxes, many of them covered by aluminum foil, or whatever that material is that dull buildings are wrapped with these days. The glare deprives the senses, and the whole place seems to evaporate. You look into the foil and try to reassure yourself that you can see where you are and that it is someplace.

The shopping center where the Penn Square Bank lived and died is about twenty minutes northwest of downtown, and it sits a literal stone's throw from Route 66, very centrally situated on the North American continent. It opened in 1960, the first such shopping center in Oklahoma City. Twenty-one years later, after a major renovation, it became an enclosed, air-conditioned mall. The Penn Square Bank did not vanish from these precincts without a trace. Its fall resonated, with grotesque consequences. The largest bank in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle-First National Bank, developed symptoms of terminal illness, courtesy of Penn Square. Then the Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Company, of Chicago —an institution that had lent more money to American business and industry than any other bank in the country—found itself so deep in the turbid backwash of Penn Square that only a multibillion-dollar government-sponsored rescue was able to prevent its failure. Defending this extreme intervention, federal banking regulators insisted that neglecting to save Continental Illinois would lead to the demise of dozens and perhaps as many as a hundred other banks. Not since the Depression had there occurred a banking event so bizarre or so unsettling. Bad fantasies loomed within easy travelling distance. What if, first, the Penn Square Bank folded, followed closely by the largest banks in the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest, and what if those failures were followed by the failures of the industrial economies of, say, Mexico and Argentina? What if Western capitalism took a dive? What if a global economic apocalypse started in an enclosed, air-conditioned mall in Oklahoma City —out there in the company of the Stout Shoppe and the Peanut Shack and the video arcade and the gift store where for twelve ninety-five you got a room freshener disguised as a porcelain duck? If you'd been exercising your imagination with that bad fantasy, you could be excused for thinking that the Penn Square Bank seemed like a peculiar first domino.

"FOLKS, we're gonna have fun tonight, but you've got to realize this is a business proposition and this is no circus," Donovan Arterburn, Jr., announced over the public-address system, which was loud enough to be heard in Arkansas. He explained the most important rules. To buy a car, you had to pay with cash, a cashier's check, or a certified check. Any buyer who was carrying less than the full purchase price could make a two-hundred-dollar deposit with cash, MasterCard, or Visa, but he had to show up with the balance before five o'clock the next day. And the balance, naturally, had to be in cash, cashier's check, or certified check. That meant American dollars, no pesos, no personal checks, no promissory notes, no letters of cred-

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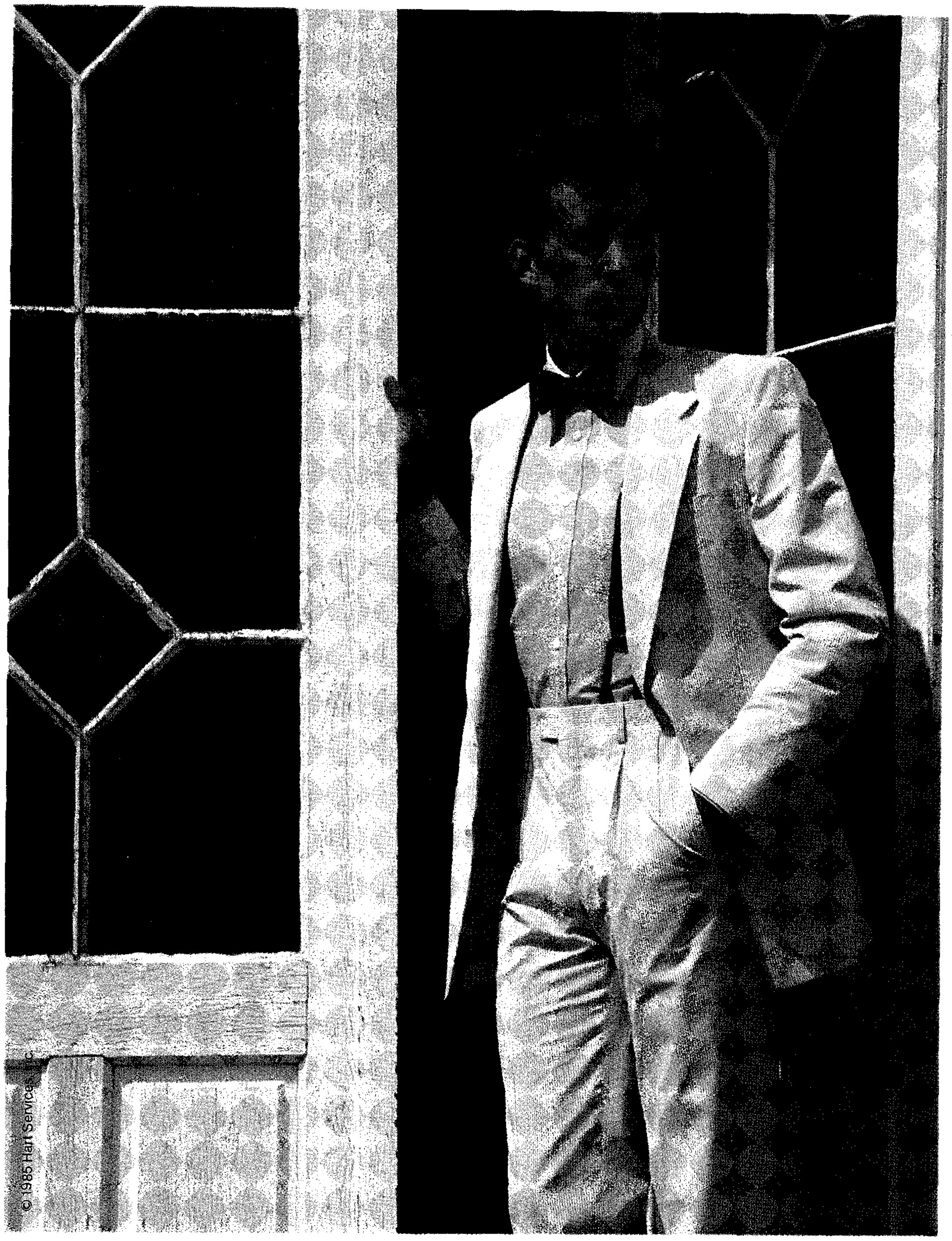

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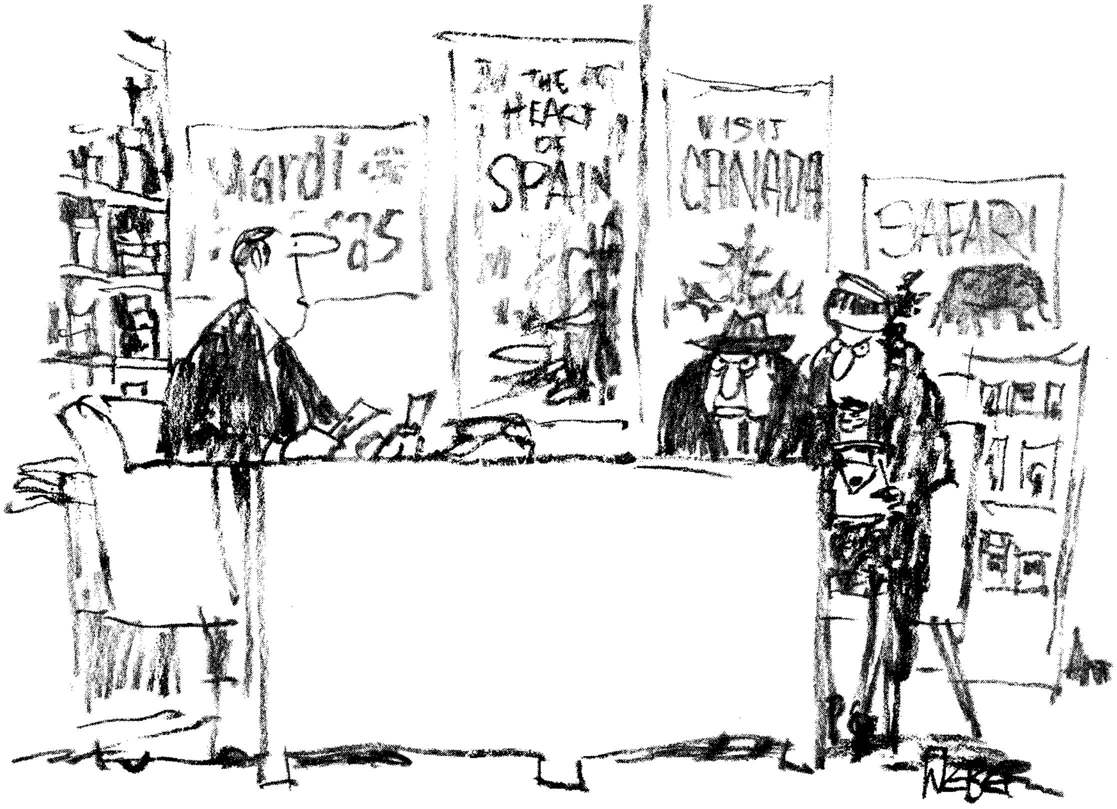


"Put it this way. We can get you to Paris, but having a good time is up to you."

• •

it, no I.O.U.s. Donovan Arterburn, Jr., repeated the ground rules, and then he repeated them about ten more times.

Arterburn stood now in the rear of an overpopulated yellow Toyota pickup truck that was idling between the two rows of cars. A policeman hugged the tailgate, another sat behind the steering wheel, a pretty young woman with dark hair and sunglasses rode shotgun, and three older women whose job would be to collect money sat around a folding table in the cargo space.

At last, the bidding started. The serious spectators were poised with their used-car-buying reference books, and—*bam bam bam*—Item No. 1 took about ninety seconds to sell. It was a 1982 Lincoln Town Car with low mileage, and it went for seventeen thousand dollars to a middle-aged man, who transgressed the rope barrier and headed unsteadily for the yellow Toyota pickup. There was applause and busy whispering while the resident experts tried to figure out whether he had paid too dear a price—that depending, of course, upon the intangible value that the car would have if it had been driven previously by someone notorious.

The bidding on the second car got under way. Arterburn said, "This next car has an appraised value of thirteen thousand five. Who'll give me fifteen thousand for it?" Arterburn's bid spotters had spread themselves out, and they surveyed the crowd with the beady circumspection of Secret Service agents. Whenever one of them saw a hand go up, he gave a startled yell, like someone slamming a thumb in a drawer. When the bidding had reached half the appraised value, Arterburn interrupted.

"Hold everything," he said. "The gentleman who bought the first car did not buy the first car after all. He did not have cash. He did not have a cashier's check. He did not have a certified check. He did not have two hundred dollars. He did not pass Go. We're going to have to resell the car. All right, let's finish the bidding on this car and we'll go back and resell the first one. Wait, no, excuse me, it seems he's found someone in the crowd who's going to lend him the money. He now has the two hundred dollars."

There was laughter and more applause, and I contributed to it. As a gawker, I felt rewarded. On a late-summer evening, I had gone to Penn Square to watch some used cars being liquidated. In no time at all, I had witnessed an easy-money unsecured loan to someone who simply had not understood the rules.

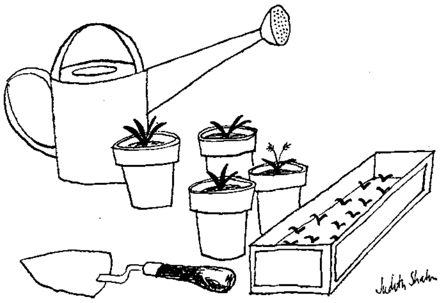
THE first productive oil well in Oklahoma was drilled by accident and stirred no enthusiasm. In the northwest corner of Indian Territory, in 1859, a Cherokee salt prospector named Lewis Ross used a spring pole—a percussion drilling device fashioned from a green sapling—to make a seven-hundred-foot hole. Instead of the brine that Ross was hoping to find, he turned up oil. This happened the same year that Colonel Edwin Drake, who was infinitely less a real colonel than Lewis Ross was a real Indian, drilled his famous well in Titusville, Pennsylvania. For a few months, Ross's well produced ten barrels of crude a day, and then it died. Almost four decades passed before a commercially successful well materialized in Oklahoma. This was the Nellie Johnstone No. 1, completed in 1897, in Bartlesville, along the Caney River.

Ten years after the Nellie Johnstone No. 1 came in, Oklahoma joined the United States. Oklahoma Territory—roughly speaking, the western half of what became the state, comprising a mixture of rankled Native American plains roamers, pious European immigrant soil-scrapers, and Dixie interlopers who had shown up for the land rush of 1889—merged with Indian Territory, which was populated by civilized Native Americans who had been forced to abandon their homes in the Deep South, and by more Dixie interlopers and their spiritual kinfolk from other neighborhoods: creatures who resented having to work for a living but were nevertheless willing to put in a few hours a day devising ways to rook the Indians out of some more land. The new state needed a capital, and a town called Guthrie, which had been the capital of Oklahoma Territory, was chosen. In 1910, however, the site was changed to Oklahoma City, which was selected though it had no natural physical beauty and very little water. Worse than that, it gave the impression as the years passed of having no oil. It did happen to be smack-dab in the center of the state, but that mainly gave rise to unflattering comparisons, as whopper oil-and-gas discoveries erupted everywhere else: near Tulsa and in the Osage and along the Cimarron River at Drumright and Cushing, all to the northeast; in Garfield County, due north; in Seminole, to the east; in Healdton, to the south. Vindication finally arrived in 1928. The discovery well of the Oklahoma City Field, the Oklahoma City No. 1, produced oil from dolomite sediments sixty-four hundred feet beneath the surface, and in the first twenty-four hours it flowed almost five thousand barrels. Shortly thereafter, the well was deepened, and it began to gush more than sixty-five hundred barrels a day.

The Oklahoma City No. 1 was a perfectly accurate harbinger. One historian has written that the Oklahoma City Field "was characterized by wild wells, floods of crude, and almost uncontrollable flows of natural gas." Overproduction got so far out of hand that within four years the price per barrel had fallen from a dollar and a half to fifteen cents. On three occasions during the nineteen-thirties, the governor dispatched the Oklahoma National Guard to enforce orders to curtail production. Five years after the discovery well was drilled, the Oklahoma City Field's annual output peaked; within the first ten years, more oil was produced than has been produced in the succeeding four and a half decades. There has been one estimate that during those first ten years one trillion two hundred billion cubic feet of natural gas escaped into the atmosphere—three and a half billion dollars, at today's somewhat depressed prices. In its lifetime, it has yielded more than seven hundred and fifty million barrels of oil and more than two trillion cubic feet of gas. The entire Oklahoma City Field—about two hundred active wells—currently produces less than twenty-five hundred barrels a day. Surveying the landscape now, you would hardly assume that production had been declining for such a long stretch and had reached such a low level. In the Oklahoma City suburbs, where there are two taco joints for every tree, you see wellheads surrounded by high fences in undeveloped residential zones, you see pumping units in strip-shopping-center parking lots. Four-story derricks straddle the wells on the grounds of the state capitol and the governor's mansion, and it matters very little that many of the wells are just barely oozing crude—that the derricks' main function is to provide a remembrance of things past. Appearances count. Mythology counts.

THERE is a fact not of regional character but of geography and geology that makes Oklahoma City a place where a Penn Square Bank could happen. Forty minutes south and west of town by car (fifteen by helicopter) lies an imaginary rectangle a hundred and twenty-five miles by two hundred and fifty miles. On a map, the rectangle runs on a southeast-to-northwest axis, covers roughly equal portions of the southwest and northwest quadrants of Oklahoma, extends into the Texas panhandle, and thus bounds the surface above what geologists know as the Anadarko Basin—a rising arid plain of red-orange Oklahoma dirt, mostly clay but high in iron oxide, passable for growing wheat and peanuts and cotton if you can figure out a way to water it. What makes the arid plain worthwhile is that beneath its surface is an almost inconceivably large volume of methane. As an Oklahoman might put it, there is a whole bunch of natural gas down there. The usual Ordovician and Pennsylvanian residues are concentrated in an unusual way. Perhaps a hundred and fifty thousand cubic miles of hydrocarbon-bearing limestone, sandstone, dolomite, chert, gravel, and shale make up the substrata—an accumulation that stretches back five hundred million years. Liberating the Anadarko's deep reserves, in the view of a prominent school of current thinking, could render trivial the wastage of gas that occurred in the Oklahoma City Field.

Widespread oil production in the Anadarko Basin began during the nineteen-twenties—shallow wells, two to three thousand feet deep—and along with the oil there was methane that is referred to as "casing-head gas" or "associated gas." For decades, geologists and petroleum engineers with the least imagination, viewing oil-production histories and knowing how far the remaining reserves had descended the slope of the bell curve, would look at the Anadarko and conclude that the gas was running out along with the oil. And they were correct: the gas that was associated with the oil *was* running out. Relatively shallow formations where oil was not plentiful also produced commercial quantities of gas. This could be found generally in the eastern part of the basin, at depths ranging from seven thousand to twelve thousand feet. The shallow gas and the casing-head gas, however, were not what made the Anadarko Basin fascinating. Its most ardent partisans believed that to reach the most gratifying zones you had to go to great depths—fifteen thousand or twenty-five thousand or thirty-five thousand feet. A more prevalent belief—one that was current well into the nineteen-seventies—held that the geological "overburden" made the deep-gas hypothesis unlikely, because the very deep sediments could not possibly be porous or permeable enough to contain hydrocarbons or to permit their flow. The cumulative weight of a crust three or five or seven miles thick, it was presumed, would slam shut the pores in the rocks—just as depressing a damp kitchen sponge with a one-ton marble pillar would squeeze out all the moisture.



Someone was going to have to drill and produce a deep-gas well before the skeptics would accept the idea that the gas was there. And even if it was there technological limitations would mean coping with erratic pressures and extremely high temperatures, which could make the available tools about as effective as Lewis Ross's spring pole. Not that anyone gave a lot of thought to testing the equipment. In the absence of serious complications, a fifteen-thousand-foot well would cost three to four million dollars. As long as the price of gas that travelled through interstate pipelines remained regulated by the federal government, which kept it very low in relation to the price of crude oil, no gambler with an inclination to see his money again cared to roll the dice.

During the late nineteen-seventies and early eighties, however, the value of fossil fuels changed, the odds changed, and a new mythology emerged. Oil and gas assumed an urgent aura of manifest destiny. It was not like high technology or any other

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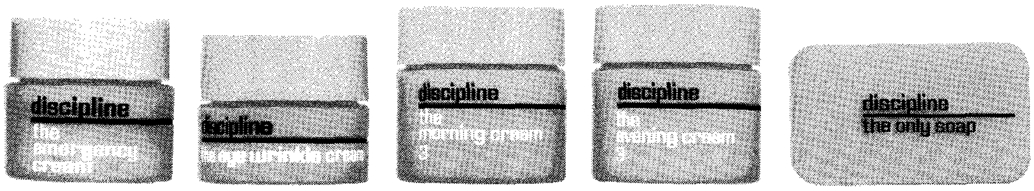
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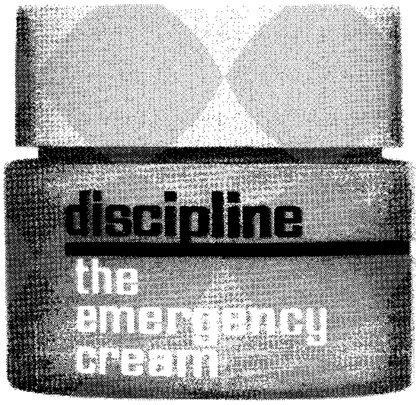

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growth industry that seemed headed toward a blindingly bright horizon. It involved mining a finite resource. The thought of running out of oil promised that an enormous amount of money could be made between now and when the last economical drop came out of the ground, and to enjoy the benefits an opportunist did not necessarily have to take heroic chances. An acquaintance of mine, a bankruptcy lawyer, once pointed out, "You've got thirteen thousand oil-and-gas companies in Oklahoma. Maybe fifteen hundred of them are looking for oil and gas. The rest are looking for investors." Another friend once endeavored to explain to me how Oklahoma City is distinctive—how it differs from, say, Tulsa, which is regarded as sleek and "Eastern" by Oklahomans who have never tasted the delights of a St. Louis or an Indianapolis. "Three years ago, I bought a new Mercedes," my friend said. "I asked the salesman to deliver it to my house. He drives it out on a Friday afternoon and I meet him in the driveway. He parks the new car and gives me the keys, and then I give him the keys to my old car, because I'm trading it in. Then he hands me a business card and says, 'Well, that's the last car I'll ever have to sell. I'm going into a new business Monday morning.' I look at the card and it says 'Fraley Oil & Gas.' That was his name—Wyman Fraley. He said that before he sold cars he'd been a preacher. The last thing I heard about him was he owed the bank a million dollars, and there was talk that he had torched his office to collect on the insurance, and he was telling people the Atlanta mob was looking for him. A guy like that could never get banked in Tulsa." Oklahoma City was blessed with a novel strain of cosmopolitanism. If you pursued a dollar there and persevered in a special way, you might be able to get yourself tailed by gangsters, but, inevitably, they would be gangsters from Atlanta—in other words, too small to make the varsity. Wyman Fraley banked at Penn Square. So did my friend who bought the new Mercedes-Benz from him. An institution such as the Penn Square Bank could have dared to be great only in Oklahoma City.

GREAT Oklahoma institutions helped to make Bill P. Jennings, the chairman and chief executive officer of the Penn Square Bank, a great man: Oklahoma Military Academy, the University of Oklahoma (class of

'48), the University of Oklahoma chapter of Sigma Chi, the University of Oklahoma School of Law, the Oklahoma Air National Guard. He interrupted his college career to spend a year with the Army Air Forces. After law school, he did a tour with the United States Air Force. As a teen-ager, he had developed an interest in flying, and as an undergraduate he had been the only Sigma Chi who owned a Cessna 140. (The plane perished in a tornado one spring. It was on the ground, and Jennings was not aboard.) In adulthood, Jennings continued to add to his record of achievement and community service: corporate director of the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce; member of the finance committee of the United Appeal; member of the boards of the Salvation Army and the Young Men's Christian Association; active in the Mummers Theatre; state chairman of the Oklahoma Symphony fund-raising campaign; chairman of the Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority; chairman of the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation. He was infected with the spirit of philanthropy. He was married and had five handsome daughters. His late father-in-law, a dedicated collector of poetry about Abraham Lincoln and a distinguished citizen of Enid, Oklahoma, had been chairman of the board of a bank in that city. His mother, well into her eighties, was chairman of the board of the Bank of Healdton, in the southern-Oklahoma town where Jennings had grown up. In 1973, when Jennings was elected president of the state Chamber of Commerce, he declared, "Our primary objective is to make Oklahoma a better place to earn a living and raise a family."

No one who had shaken Bill Jennings' hand could insist that he was less than a nice guy. To be introduced to Jennings and not to be taken with his affability, his earnest good nature, you would have to be a misanthrope. Knowing that he was a banker sealed the favorable impression. Gamblers, salesmen, roving promoters—wisdom taught that when those people smiled and looked you in the eye you maintained skepticism. An excessively warm and friendly banker was a peculiar proposition, more difficult to figure. From a banker who wanted to convey that he was tough when it came to credit, and even tougher when it came to collecting, you would normally expect cool solicitude. Bill Jennings fancied himself that way: tough

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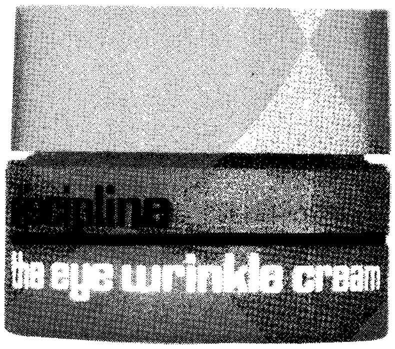

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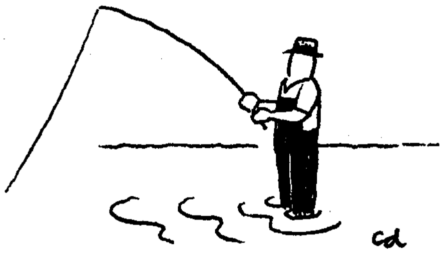
when he needed to be. In practice, however, he could never be as tough as he might wish. He looked you in the eye and smiled, and all that natural affability got in his way.

No doubt Jennings' charm had something to do with his having grown up a small-town banker's son and an only child. He knew that he was special, but he understood the rules that his neighbors lived by—one being that, whatever you do, you do not want to alienate the banker—and he learned never to condescend. His given name was Billy Paul, and some of his pals—mainly the old Sigma Chis who had stayed close across the years—still called him that. Otherwise, he was Beep, a nickname to mesh with his style—pinstripes and bold cigars. He could easily have applied his charm to politics, but he seemed to have made an early career decision to become professionally avuncular. His hair was all white by the time he was fifty-five, his eyes were blue and crinkly, and when he got rolling in Beeperese—gusty, vibrant speechifying, the flowing cadences of a Dale Carnegie summa cum laude—he would often grimace and squint into the distance above your head, toward the low clouds. His hairline had receded considerably, and what hair remained he parted about an inch above the top of his left ear and swept east. In a few more years, his cheeks, which were pink and jowly, would begin to resemble dewlaps. He was six feet tall and leaner than his face suggested. Seeing him in charcoal-gray pinstripes, you might look for a watch chain, thinking that one would fit in, but Bill Jennings was swifter than that. Seated, he held his cigar between the tips of his thumb and forefinger and kept it poised like a horn player anticipating a cue. Each short puff had delicacy.

The oil boom arrived in Healdton, in Carter County, Oklahoma, in 1913, ten years before Billy Paul was born. His father, O. T. Jennings—the initials stood for Owen Thomas, but everyone called him Al—had started out at the Bank of Healdton as a teller and, in the late twenties, had bought the place. One of his goals was to cultivate an unbankerlike reputation. A newspaper reporter who was fond of Al Jennings once wrote, "He's liable to have his hat turned up like Joe College, and he may okay a deal by yelling across the street." After enumerating some other appealing traits, the reporter concluded, "He's quite a guy." Al Jennings died in 1965, and the newspaperman wrote of him, "He built a good bank, mostly by his own rules, some of which would have given a serious type examiner apoplexy—until he found the books were in order." There was a period of time, around 1920, when the oil field of Carter County was one of the most productive in the world, but Al Jennings was not a venture capitalist. He did what was expected of a small-town banker—conformed his ambitions to reality, lent money to the feed-store owner and the car dealer and any oil-field roughnecks who were reasonably likely to pay it back—and endured some marginal moments. The Bank of Healdton survived the Depression, but barely. In 1932, the deposits were eighty-three thousand dollars, loans were twenty thousand dollars, and the capital and surplus totalled sixteen thousand five hundred dollars. In grander times, when the bank actually had funds to lend, Al Jennings regularly received requests for credit information about customers. When several of these query letters arrived in the mail one day, Bill Jennings, who had gone to work for the bank full time in 1953, showed them to his father and asked what procedure he should follow. Al Jennings laughed and said, "If they don't put anything in the letter, we just throw it away. If they put in two bits, we answer it. And if they stick in fifty cents, son, we tell them the *truth*."

ONE spring day in 1976, during a regular 8 A.M. loan-committee meeting at the Penn Square Bank, Bill Jennings said, "I want to start an oil-and-gas department at this bank." Not many specifics accompanied this proposal, but it was evident that Jennings meant exactly what he said. Penn Square's assets totalled less than forty million dollars, and there was only one oil-and-gas loan among them. No one else in the room knew anything about oil-and-gas lending, but everyone knew that Jennings had not tossed the idea out idly. He owned the bank, and he intended to make it grow.



When the Penn Square Bank opened, in 1960, Jennings had moved from Healdton to Oklahoma City to run it. The new bank was organized by a developer named Ben Wileman, who had built the shopping center in which the bank was situated, and by the families of Senator Robert S. Kerr and his associate Dean McGee—two men whose opinions of how commerce ought to proceed in Oklahoma mattered no more than rainfall and sunlight do to a garden. Kerr and McGee were interested in banks but not in operating a bank. Most of the time, Kerr kept busy running the United States Senate, and McGee looked after Kerr-McGee Oil Industries. Wileman was the bank's chairman, and Jennings was hired to manage it day-to-day. In 1964, he left Penn Square to become executive vice-president and chief lending officer of the Fidelity Bank, an established downtown institution that was also controlled by the Kerrs and the McGees. Ten years later, someone other than Bill P. Jennings was named president of Fidelity.

Chances are that Jennings would have become the president of Fidelity if he had not been the loan officer primarily responsible for the Four Seasons Nursing Centers account. In 1972, a federal grand jury in New York indicted eight men on charges that they had conspired to falsify information about Four Seasons and to defraud the investing public. It was alleged that, in the process, the defendants had cost investors two hundred million dollars. Over a period of several months, the price of Four Seasons stock had gone from eleven dollars a share to more than a hundred dollars and then had become nearly worthless. When the indictments were returned, Four Seasons was described as the largest criminal securities fraud in United States history. Four of the eight indictees were convicted, and two went to prison. The government attorneys described Jennings' role in Four Seasons as that of "unindicted co-conspirator." Officially, Jennings was guilty of nothing. At the Fidelity Bank, however, his star would rise no farther.

Jennings was fifty-one years old. It was not too late to start over, provided that he could start at the top, so he decided to return to Penn Square, this time as owner. The bank cost Jennings and two partners three million dollars. Each of the new owners had held modest amounts of Penn Square

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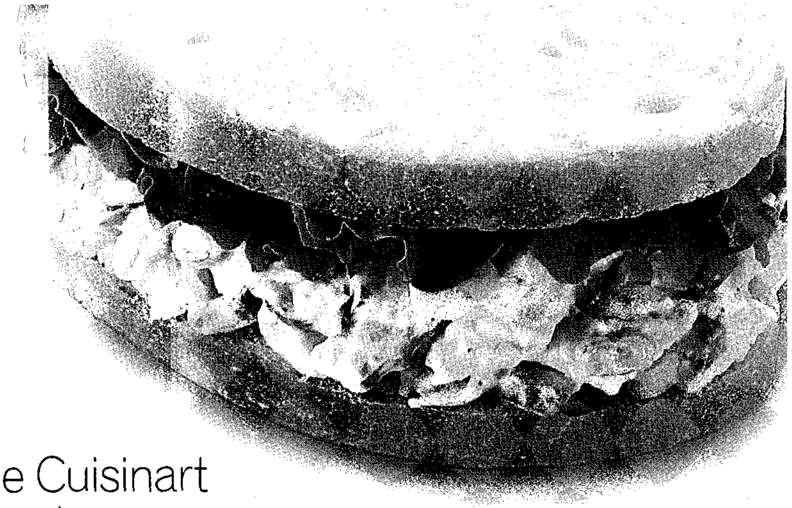

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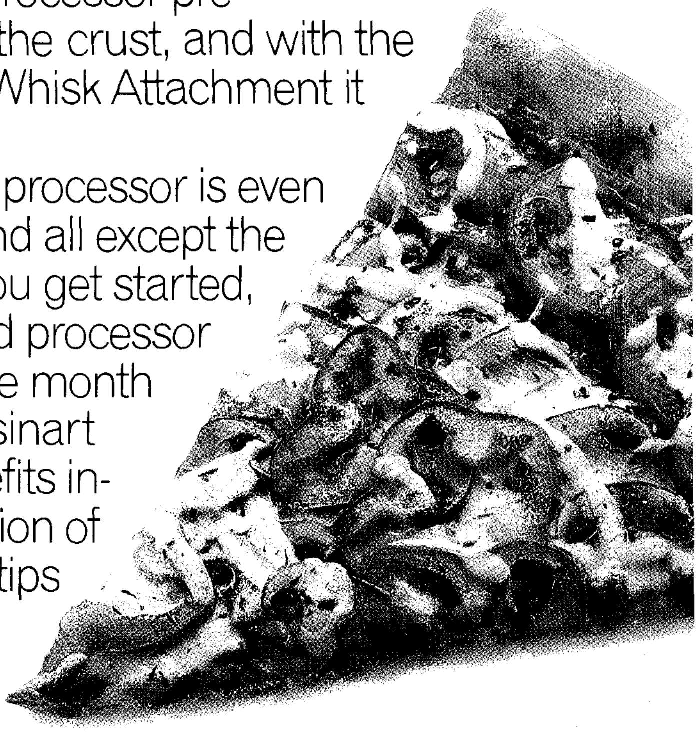

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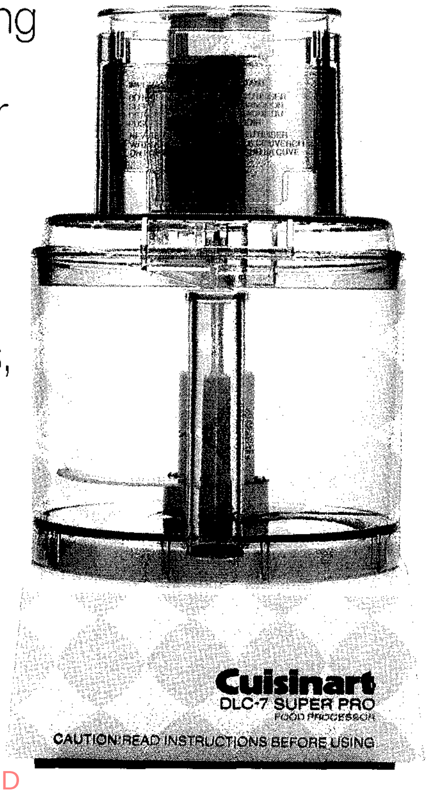

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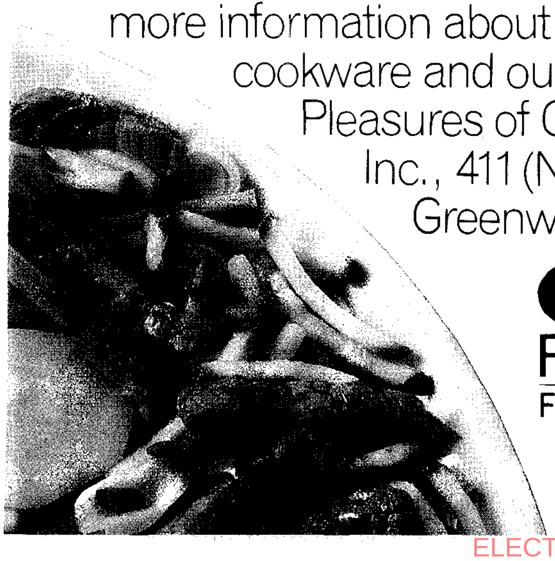

stock before the sale, and each ended up with a quarter of the bank. The remaining quarter was divided among several stockholders. As a result of subsequent trades and new stock offerings, Jennings and his family controlled the largest proportion—about thirty per cent. For a time, when he listed this asset on his financial statement he assigned to it a value of between eight and nine million dollars.

There were half a dozen Penn Square officers present when Jennings said, "I want to start an oil-and-gas department." One of them was a thirty-five-year-old former national bank examiner named William Lakey. After the loan-committee meeting adjourned, Lakey approached Jennings and said, "I'd like to try some of that." Later, he recalled, "Nobody else knew anything about oil-and-gas lending. I didn't, either, but at least I was interested."

Lakey's formal training as an energy lender began immediately. He took a one-day trip to Dallas for a tutorial with an officer at the Republic-Bank, one of the largest banks in the Southwest. Back in Oklahoma City, he sought advice from a couple of people at the Fidelity Bank on how to collateralize and secure an oil-and-gas-production loan. A lawyer who represented Fidelity drafted deed-of-trust forms that were virtually identical to the forms used by Republic-Bank, and oil-and-gas mortgage forms that were similar to Fidelity's. "That was it," Lakey said. "We were in business." Except for the one oil-and-gas loan that was then on the books—Lakey remembers that it had not yet been designated a nonperforming loan, although the customer happened to have financial problems—virtually everything in Penn Square's loan portfolio was committed to small-business loans, real-estate and construction loans, and consumer loans for automobiles, boats, and new patios. The bank's capital was four million dollars, and this meant, according to banking regulations, that the most the bank could lend to a single customer was four hundred thousand. If Jennings wanted to involve Penn Square in energy lending, he was going to have to entice customers somewhat smaller than Gulf and Mobil and Texaco.

Eighteen months later, Lakey decided to quit his job at Penn Square. Jennings wished him well and suggested that he lacked aggressiveness and should give thought to becoming

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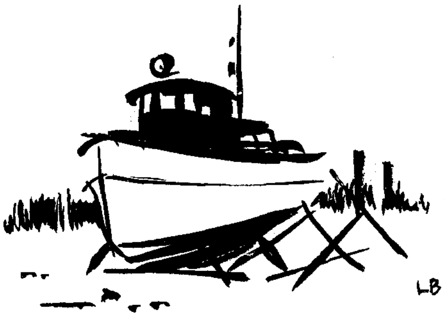
a schoolteacher—an opinion that disturbed Lakey, because he more or less agreed. Although Lakey naturally liked Jennings, working for him had been frustrating. "Beep was a can't-say-no guy," Lakey recalls. "His attitude toward everyone was always 'Come in, we'll talk to you.' The way it worked was he'd give an oral commitment to someone, and if I didn't want to make the loan I was supposed to turn it down. He didn't want to be the one to do that. Beep would call me and say, 'We want to lend So-and-So four hundred thousand.' I'd ask him, 'By when?' He'd say, 'Today.' He'd say, 'Just lend it and get the information later.' Well, hell, I might need to spend a little more time than that. If you work that way and find out six months later you've got a problem but you're still trying to get the documents and the collateral together—if you haven't got everything filed and recorded and secured but meanwhile the guys you banked already have the money—they aren't necessarily going to be interested in coöperating with you. Beep would take on people that a lot of other bankers wouldn't touch. He's never been one of those my-chair's-up-here-and-you're-sitting-down-there bankers. His attitude was more like 'I'm gonna show you what a man can do.' Beep liked to make a guy feel like he was helping him out. In effect, he'd be saying, 'I'm doing things for you that nobody else'll do for anybody else.' And I always had a feeling that people would pay Beep back before they'd pay anyone else."

Al Jennings once told his son, "Only about twenty per cent of the people will pay you when they say they will." Ample measures of trust and optimism blended in Beep Jennings' personality. In Healdton, where his father knew not only the customer but also the customer's parents, in-laws, grandparents, pediatrician, and undertaker, it made some sense to base a lending decision on an evaluation of character as much as on collateral and credit history. The banking habits that dispirited a sane man like Lakey were regarded as strengths by Jennings' champions. Jennings, it was said, *believed* in people. Jennings gave you the benefit of the doubt. Certain businessmen would testify that Jennings was their only banker friend. Jennings had lent them money when nobody else would, Jennings would "bank some risk," Jennings would "do the unusual deal." The unusual deal that turned out all right fortified the original optimism. It was a banking philosophy that depended upon scruples and conscience. At Penn Square, Jennings would demonstrate to the local marketplace: "*Here's* how you can bank, and it can *work*."

MUCH later, trying to explain what had happened, Jennings said, "I had a concept." Simply stated, the concept held that a bank did not have to lend its own deposits, because it could lend other banks' deposits. Penn Square could earn interest by lending its own funds but could generate far greater earnings, with very little risk, by arranging loans and collecting fees as a middleman. Thus could a modest suburban bank in Oklahoma City become a loan-brokering merchant bank in the style of the great, loosely regulated financial institutions of Central and Western Europe.

The details were somewhat complicated, but Jennings' concept involved no chicanery; nor was it even a brave new idea. Small banks have always relied upon bigger banks—or, as the terms have evolved, "community" and "regional" banks have relied upon "money center" banks. Penn Square was, of course, a community bank that grew into a regional bank. In the United States, "money center" means New York, Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Dallas, Miami. There is a range of special services that the small banks cannot economically provide for themselves. Performing these services is often barely profitable for the big banks, but they do it, because of the unavoidable interdependency of banks. Furthermore, in the course of things a big bank gets a chance to do profitable favors for a small bank without having to do much work, such as buying "overlines"—that is, lending money to customers of the small bank. The bank that buys the overline is said to "participate" in the loan. By law, a national bank can lend no more than one-tenth of its capital to a single customer. At its zenith, Penn Square could legally lend three and a half million dollars at one time. A customer who wished to borrow four and a half million would place the bank in the situation of needing to sell a one-million-dollar overline. Banks also sell loan participations because they do not have sufficient funds on hand to make a loan (they lack "liquidity") or because they wish to diversify their portfolio (they have filled their quota of, say, commercial-real-estate loans, and now along comes another real-estate-loan request, so they direct it to another bank) or because they lack expertise in a loan applicant's line of business (in other words, because they do not wish to diversify their portfolio). A bank can sell loan participations to banks either larger or smaller than it is. Fluid metaphors characterize these transactions. A larger correspondent bank is an "upstream" bank; a loan sold to a smaller bank goes "downstream." Transitive verbs blossom like water lilies: "We upstreamed that loan to Chase Manhattan," or "We downstreamed a hundred thousand to First National of Tishomingo." Liquidity is paramount. Trust flows freely.

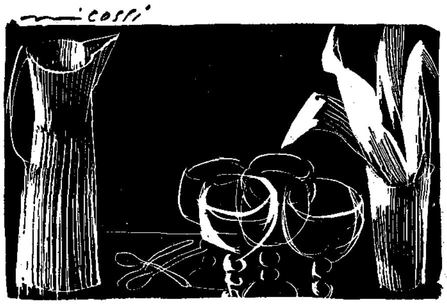


At Penn Square, there was such a creature as a one-hundred-per-cent loan participation. In this instance, the loan-originating bank had in effect ceased being a bank. It found the borrower and delivered him into the hands of the big lender, collecting a fee but not retaining any investment in the loan. For its fee, the originating bank—Penn Square, say—would "service" the loan. The bank that had bought the loan wanted tangible evidence that the borrower was worth the risk, and Penn Square had a duty to provide this. Penn Square agreed to perfect any secured interest in collateral and to forward interest payments to the lender. From Penn Square's point of view, the numbers looked irresistible. Life would be wonderful indeed if, all in a day's work, you could sell a ninety-nine-per-cent participation in a ten-million-dollar loan, retaining only a hundred thousand dollars of risk, with the rest of the deal belonging to one other bank or many other banks. Penn Square's loan-origination fee—usually one per cent—would come to a hundred thousand dollars, and so the bank would earn overnight a one-hundred-per-cent return on its portion of the credit. Life would be even more wonderful if you could collect fees while selling one-hundred-per-cent participations, thus earning an infinite return.

A potentially limitless cycle of growth could result from all this. Through aggressive salesmanship, a bank with, say, fifty million dollars in loans on its books could originate two hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of loans. More often than not, because the borrowers would live or conduct business near the bank that arranged the loan, that bank would enjoy the benefit of increased deposits in the operating accounts of the borrowers. Greater deposits plus the income collected in loan-origination fees would mean greater profits, and greater profits would add to a bank's capital and permit it to make larger loans and also to increase its credibility and stature as a loan broker. Growth begets growth. Upon assuming control of Penn Square, Jennings announced that within ten years its assets would grow from thirty-five million dollars to a hundred million. The man underestimated himself. The goal was reached within four years, and within six years Penn Square's assets totalled almost half a billion dollars. Along the way, the bank sold two billion dollars' worth of additional loans.

Why do other small banks not attempt what Jennings set out to do at Penn Square? Above all, most small banks do not have access to a large pool of eager borrowers, willing to assume huge liabilities at exorbitant interest rates. The Penn Square Bank, however, *was* so blessed. When Jennings began to envision himself as a merchant banker, oil-and-gas lending was not yet part of his concept. He was actually thinking of real estate. During the mid-seventies, however, real estate began to lose its allure, and petroleum developed an allure that it had never quite demonstrated before. Automobile bumpers in Texas and Oklahoma and Louisiana started bearing stickers that said, "Let the Yankee bastards freeze in the dark," and "If you don't have an oil well, get one." Jennings was a registered Democrat who voted for Republican Presidential candidates. He could bridge a gap, and he could easily recognize an unpragmatic sentiment. As a patriotic Oklahoman, he instinctively understood the chauvinism of the oil-and-gas-producing heart of the country, but the truth was that the decent, right-thinking people who had gone to the trouble of owning or leasing mineral rights throughout Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana did not have the capital that they needed to get the oil and gas out of the ground. The Yankee bastards had the capital. Understanding that was what could make Jennings' concept work: If the Yankee bastards had the dollars, what good did it do if you froze them? His role as merchant banker was to bring the two parties together for some common profit. "The government gave us a mandate, didn't they?" Jennings liked to say, referring to the exigencies of the energy crisis. A mandate meant that somebody had better get out there and do something. And if you left the job to people who took six weeks to look at a deal that could be sized up and shaken on by the time the waitress brought the tab, then New England would shiver and Oklahoma would still be no better than a dust bowl.

AT times, trying to understand what the Penn Square Bank had been all about strained my capacities, and I would consult an attorney whom I will call Murray. I valued Murray's ability to focus. We would meet for breakfast occasionally at a molded-plastic bistro called Denny's. I liked Murray, although he talked a bit too much, and I liked him *because* he talked a bit too much. You could stay as long as you pleased at Denny's; the waitress just kept pouring the coffee. Murray started out in the Bronx or someplace like it, but he had been in Oklahoma enough years so that his monologues contained frequent pauses, which were followed by the statement "Now, Mister, I'm gonna tell ya somethin' "—and then he would launch into a parable full of local color and universal implications. When I called him on the telephone to make a date, I would always ask how he was, and he would always say, "Well, sir, I'm still short and I'm still chubby." Murray was in his late forties, he had a graying dark beard, and he chain-smoked unfiltered Camels. Diamonds encircled the face of his gold Rolex wristwatch. He wore a big diamond ring and a gold bracelet, and I think there may have been a gold chain around his neck. A friend told me that Murray had had a coronary attack at a tender age, but this had not curbed his appetite for high-risk cuisine. He would instruct the waitress, "Bring me a No. 4—the eggs Benedict—and make sure you put a lot of that fattening sauce that's real bad for you all over it. Get plenty of sauce on the bacon, too." Then he would light a Camel and explain again how the cosmos worked.



One morning, Murray's lecture began, "In the past, we have had irresponsible borrowers and we have had irresponsible lenders, but what we had here, and are having to witness the consequences of in profusion, is the meeting, for the first time, of the irresponsible lender and the irresponsible borrower. Any bank that lends money to Poland is nuts. Any bank that lends to Yugoslavia is nuts. Anybody who lends a billion dollars to Mexico is out of his ever-lovin' gourd. And you know what is at the bottom of this? An irresponsible government. The guys who ran Penn Square weren't born mad killers. They were a symptom." Oklahoma's oilies, in other words, were just a bunch of semi-domesticated Third World borrowers.

When the waitress delivered the eggs Benedict, Murray had a chance to regroup his thoughts. Lots of pepper atop the hollandaise, lots of salt atop the pepper. Then he held forth on ARAMCO, King Khalid, Colonel Qaddafi, OPEC, Exxon, and the culpability of David Rockefeller and Walter Wriston and their ilk; returned to Mexico, Poland, and Yugoslavia, with side trips to Chile and Morocco; and went on to the stupidity of experts, the timidity of bureaucrats, rampant inflation, worldwide recession, Dwight Eisenhower, Jimmy Carter, the corruption inherent in the tax codes, the indecent motives of the typical oil-and-gas-drilling-fund investor, and simple everyday greed—in other words, the vast matrix at the center of which was an ambitious bank in Oklahoma City that had been run by promoters whose only sin was believing their own hype.

I had done some thinking along these lines myself, but Murray had a poetic manner of expression, and I did not want to insult him by accusing him of unoriginality. The big picture did look like that. The fact was that for the better part of a decade there had existed a virtually global belief that the price of petroleum and everything that depended on it would go no

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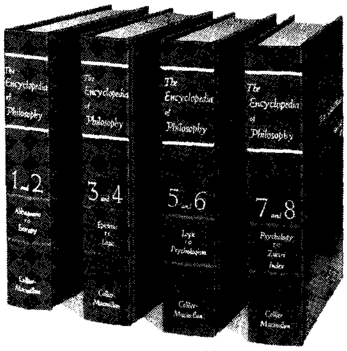

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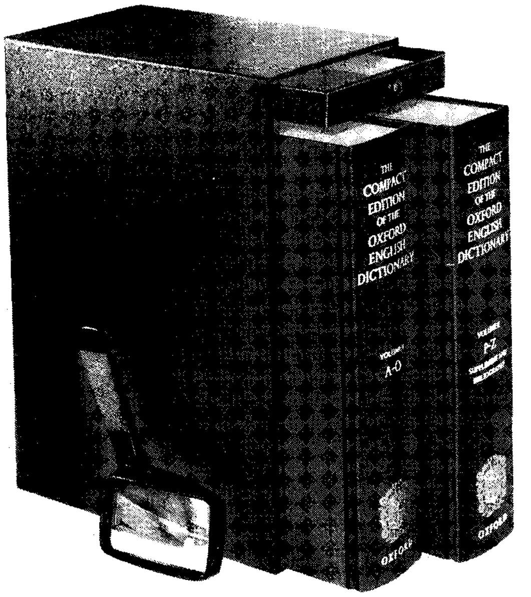

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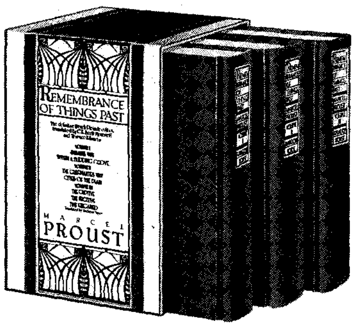

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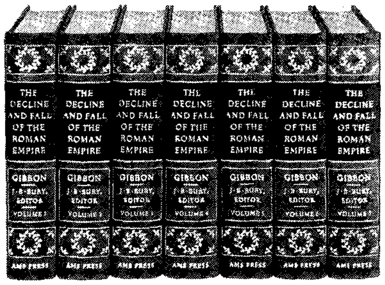

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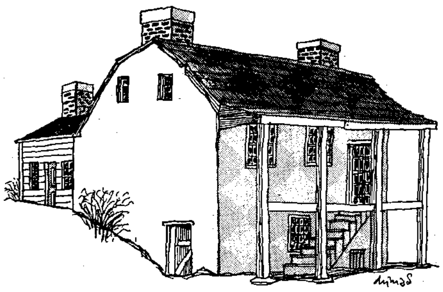
way but up. Pessimists accepted the inevitability, optimists saw an opportunity, and cynics winked. You could take this belief to the bank and declare it as collateral. Or, if you looked like an O.K. person, the bank might even come to you. This was a magical phase of history, and while it lasted the Penn Square Bank radiated enormous charm. The Penn Square Bank was operated by freedom-loving patriots for the benefit of themselves and their kindred spirits and for the higher goals of the United States, a civilized democracy that sought to liberate itself from economic blackmail by dubious foreign oligarchs: hypocrites who persisted in chopping off the hands of petty thieves even as they engorged themselves with trillions of dollars from the export of petroleum that they'd never deserved to own in the first place—men with unsightly beards who hung out in the desert and worshipped the wrong god and dressed funny and had swarthy skin, unpronounceable names, and more wives than any law should permit. Or something like that. The whole weird situation was simple, but it was complicated, too.

By the last cup of coffee that morning, the conversation had shifted to a client of Murray's—a likable oilman whose assets Murray was trying to protect from litigious investors in twenty-two states who kept mentioning the word "fraud." I eased into the subject by dropping such phrases as "blue-skied" and "due diligence" and "full disclosure." Before I got far, Murray became overwrought.

"You want to know what's really fraudulent?" he said. "I'll tell you what is. It's when you run a movie studio and you take a lousy script and make a Grade B picture from it and all it shows is some twenty-two-year-old actress who's never been in front of a camera before but when you shake her up and down you get people excited. Maybe you splash some water on her to make her look better. Then you take that and call it art and sell it to the public for five dollars a ticket. And the public, because all they've done is watch TV, want to pay the five dollars, so you've got no risk when you decide to make one of those lousy movies. In California, they're cranking them out as fast as they can, and when they've made enough money they say, 'Uh-oh, I'm gonna have to pay taxes, I better go drill me an oil well or something.' So they go invest in a drilling fund and it says right on the front cover of the prospectus that there's a risk involved. But these people aren't accustomed to taking risks—they want a one-hundred-per-cent tax deduction without having to put up any money. Then, if they end up losing any of that money, they scream 'Fraud!' Well, in the oil business, at least we were punching holes in the ground."

As a defense of the oil-and-gas industry, this seemed rather oblique, but I had no quarrel with Murray's basic thesis. I cannot report anything else he said that morning, however, because my attention lapsed when he said "punching holes in the ground." The most nouveau oilies were always referring to drilling wells as "punching holes in the ground." Hearing that and similar locutions invariably launched me into daydreams about how the mental-health profession might regard the oil business. The etiology of the boom and the Penn Square Bank could be traced to the sources that Murray had mentioned, but he had omitted the substance that gave all these elements force and dynamism. The substance was Okiesmo.

Believing that yahooism was perverse did not make you unwelcome at Penn Square, but it meant that you had to wait your turn in line behind the guys who had superior Okiesmo (accent on the second syllable). At the head of the line were open-minded independent oilmen whose meritocratic intuitions told them that anyone who could afford to own, say, a few houses that came equipped with private zoos and climate-control regulators in all the bathrooms that would make it either rain or snow or feel like the Mojave indoors—being able to pay for that meant that you had collected a reasonable return on your investment. The rewards were Providence's gifts to anyone who labored diligently; the sowers were reaping for a change. Because of Okiesmo, men did not merely set out to find hydrocarbons; they punched holes in the ground. Okiesmo emanated from the rig floor up. All the roughnecks had Okiesmo, because they handled heavy pipe and got dirty every day—they toted some iron. The bosses in the office paid for the iron and imputed Okiesmo to themselves. When something went wrong out on a rig, men with mucho Okiesmo knew how to jam their hands in their pockets and utter four-letter words polysyllabically. Naturally, the more you owed the bank, the higher your Okiesmo Quotient. Ironic self-pity was permitted; whining was not.



Okiesmo dialogue went:

"Only time I found oil last year was when I checked my dipstick."

"Butch, you cain't *find* oil if you're looking for it over at the Petroleum Club."

You could begin life as a runt, but if you worked out with weights and swallowed plenty of starch, got square-faced and jowly, you could develop your Okiesmo potential. Okiesmo was a sort of acquired nucleoplasm. It manifested itself in drilling rigs, aircraft, hand-tooled boots. Rigs that could drill to twenty-five thousand feet flowed more Okiesmo than rigs that could go to only twelve thousand. Okiesmo travelled well to Acapulco and Vegas. A jet got you there faster than a turboprop, two jets were better than one, every jet deserved a helicopter as a hangar mate, jet-propelled helicopters beat everything. Slaved-over cowhide boots had plenty of Okiesmo, but lizardskin had even more, and eelskin topped that. If you ran across something with more Okiesmo than anteater, you were supposed to buy it. Upwardly mobile Okiesmo was a white Lincoln Continental with one hubcap missing. The bumper sticker said, "Don't tell my folks I'm working in the Oilpatch. They think I play piano in a whorehouse." A good Okiesmo way to travel to the golf course was by helicopter. If you made a habit of driving ten miles in one direction, parking your Continental, choppering fifteen miles back in the direction you had just come from, and landing next to the first tee two minutes before your starting time, you would not be unique, but no one would ever question your Okiesmo. Having too much Okiesmo aged you. It encouraged the illusion that life could imitate a previous lifetime. No matter how old you were, you were always seven, or seventeen—ageless. Ex-linebacker turned fried-okra connoisseur was standard—very few ectomorphs. Excessive Okiesmo got dissipated during forty-eight-hour saturnalias in hotel suites, complete

The Spirit of America

Liberty by Ken Ragan

OLD GRAND-DAD
86
The Spirit of America
OLD GRAND-DAD
86

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Old Grand-Dad

Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey. 86 Proof. Old Grand-Dad Distillery Co., Frankfort, KY 40601. ©1985 National Distillers.

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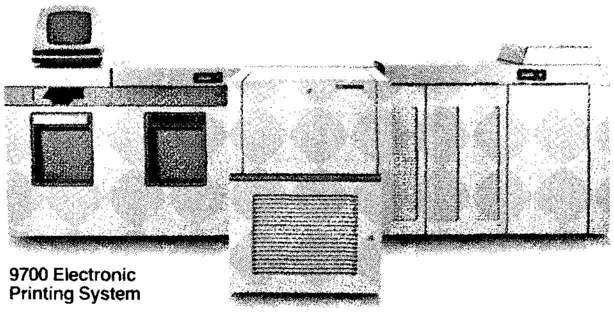
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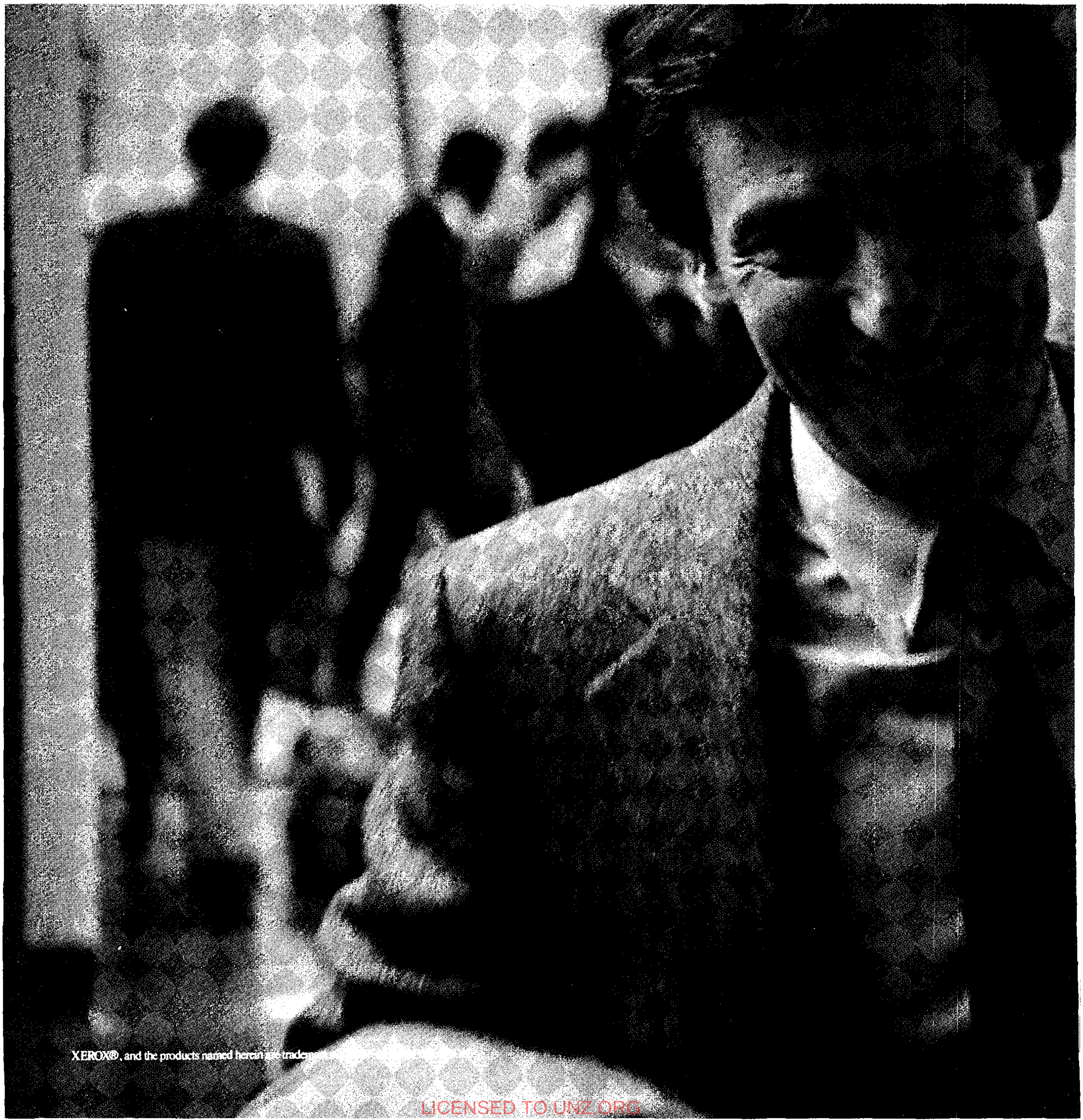

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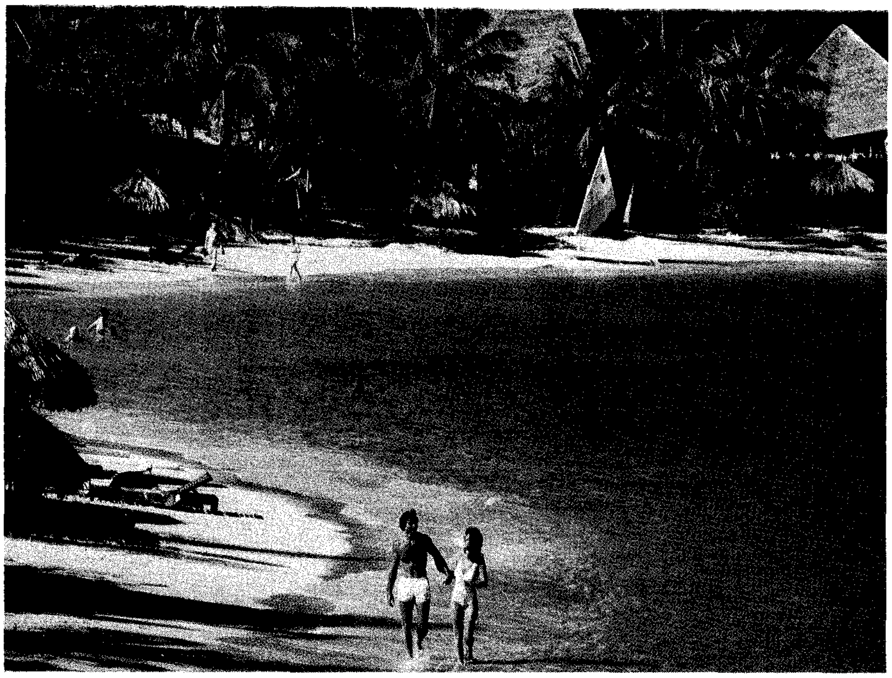

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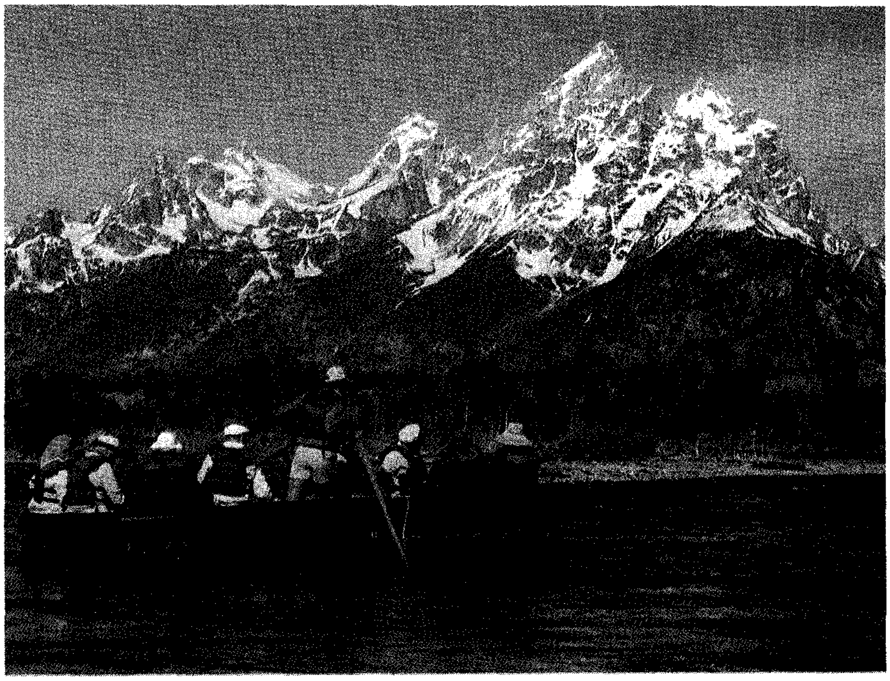

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ROCKRESORTS

with flaming hundred-dollar bills, plenty of company, and room-service charges that ran to four figures. ("Hey, stud, you wanna send us up the left side of the menu real quick?") No women had Okiesmo. Men with Okiesmo coupled with women who admired men with Okiesmo. Okiesmo gave wings to myth.

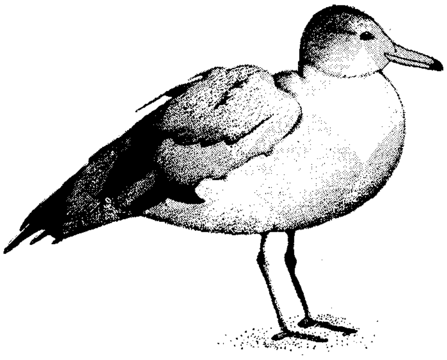
ANY quest for oil and gas must yield to the preliminary quest for capital, and a coöperative banker can be a rewarding acquaintance. Classic, conservative petroleum-banking theory rests upon two easy-to-grasp principles: the Catch-22 and the pyramid scheme. A classic, conservative banker will not lend money for oil-and-natural-gas exploration to anyone who cannot pledge as security already existing oil-and-gas production: you cannot enter the game—here is the Catch-22—unless you have previously played and won. The pyramid metaphor looms once you have borrowed money to drill for oil or gas and have explored successfully. It becomes very difficult to stop borrowing, unless you choose to assume the tax burdens that come with success. Because the oil business is as much about avoiding paying taxes as it is about selling a product, that option is, practically speaking, irrelevant. As long as an operator can manage to discover new oil-and-gas reserves, his most sensible approach will be to continue borrowing and exploring, exploring and borrowing. One credit device that permits the borrowing pyramid to grow is "the evergreen revolver." True believers believe that in an inflationary cycle the evergreen revolver costs nothing. It operates according to the idea that a banker, once he has lent money to, say, a rancher who pledges as security a hundred head of cattle, can keep lending him more as long as he adds sixty calves every year. The new calves pay the interest on the original loan, create security for a bigger new loan, and keep the credit revolving—evergreen. If the banker lends against oil-and-gas reserves instead of cattle, the borrower has an annual obligation to explore and thereby increase the value of his reserves. The evergreen revolver is no-tomorrow credit—money that never has to be paid back as long as you keep drilling, adding reserves, snowballing. During the oil-and-gas boom, it was a license that permitted the borrower and the lender to have a mitt deep inside each other's pocket.

When it comes to avoiding paying

taxes, Exxon and Mobil ask themselves different questions from those asked by the so-called independent oilmen whose lives are ruled by the Catch-22 and the borrowing pyramid. Broadly speaking, an independent oil operator is an entity—an individual or a company—that finds oil and gas and depends upon other entities to transport the raw material, refine it, and market it. Independents tend not to be vertically integrated. Independents tend not to drill exploratory wells in the North Sea or in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, but they drill more domestic oil wells and gas wells and discover more hydrocarbons each year than the twenty largest integrated oil companies combined. There are, among others, large independents, small independents, and Oklahoma-type independents. The Oklahoma-type independent—who exists not only in Oklahoma but also in Texas, Louisiana, California, Kansas, Arkansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, New York, West Virginia, and other venues—has a balance sheet that looks dire. An active Oklahoma-type independent is a theoretically wealthy man with no money who borrows and spends dollars this year in quest of oil-and-gas production that will pay off last year's trade creditors as well as the interest owed on this year's bank debt.

I spent my youth up the turnpike from Penn Square, in Tulsa, which the Chamber of Commerce somehow felt entitled to call the Oil Capital of the World. I recall strange and wonderful tales of Oklahoma-bred independent oilmen—wildcatters who combatted the Saturday-night fidgets by going to the Philtower Building downtown, tossing fifty- and hundred-dollar bills from the rooftop, and, as the bills fluttered to earth, shooting at them with .38-calibre revolvers. These interesting people owned private airplanes, and when they went out for dinner they remembered to take along their own dance bands. Mini-fleets of limos double-parked for them in front of the Waldorf. When they were asked, they explained that their riches came from "th'awl bidness." Usually, of course, they went broke; the most legendary among them went broke several times. Perhaps apocryphal, although probably not, these independent oilmen should not be mistaken as representative of an entire industry. There are, in reality, as many breeds of independent oilmen as there are ways to screw up and lose a promising well. The lending standards of the Penn Square Bank were conceived with good will toward all Oklahoma-type independent oilmen, although among the subspecies who found their way to the bank were an inordinate number of arrivistes. These "new oilies"—as they were derisively called by the older oilies—did not seem to be interested in geology for geology's sake, did not carefully discriminate among theories of continental drift and collision, basin-and-range formation, plate tectonics, compaction of sediments, magma flows, and all that. What attracted this fresh blood to the oil business in general and to the Penn Square Bank in particular did not really have much to do with concepts or blueprints for the twenty-first century. As a group, the new oilies tended to be either too young or too little concerned with history to realize that the oil business ran in cycles, subject to the law of gravity. Many of these customers did not know for sure what a balance sheet was, much less what one was supposed to look like. This did not prevent them from developing Exxonish fantasies that starred themselves.

To illustrate a couple of other principles of petroleum finance, I will use the sums one million and two million, because they're easy to work with. Now, one of the fundamental rules of oil-and-gas banking says that you can borrow approximately half the future value of the oil-and-gas production that you can prove you own. Two million dollars in the ground will get you a million dollars at the bank. To borrow a million dollars, you have to pledge as security "proven reserves"—an inventory of fossil fuel in the ground—with a future worth (discounted for inflation) of two million dollars. Bankers who do oil-and-gas lending are not meant to be artists. The banker's role is supposed to be functional rather than inspirational. The banker tells himself that as long as he sticks to the guidelines set by his bank he has done his job. He is supposed to say no until the cushions against risk justify a yes. The petroleum engineer interprets the reservoir and suggests a range of recoverable hydrocarbons. The banker is supposed to take the engineer's most conservative figures and ask, "Is this oil or gas production? From how many wells does it flow? What are the prices of oil and gas and money today? What will happen to those prices during the term of the loan and beyond?" The banker is supposed to remember to divide by two. The classic, conservative petroleum banker's job is to secure the exits.



There are also what bankers call "negative oil-and-gas-lending parameters." Undeveloped leases have no collateral value; drilling rigs and other equipment have virtually no collateral value; even wells that have been drilled and that show oil and gas but do not yet have a history of significant, consistent production—all these potentially valuable assets were, for collateral purposes, once considered worthless. As the boom of the late nineteen-seventies intensified, some banks would refuse to lend to anyone who had been in the oil business less than a decade. Penn Square happened not to be such a bank. Beep Jennings believed that "character" could compensate for missing collateral. Where the asset banker saw only one approach ("You propose the collateral and I decide what it's worth"), the character banker could conceive of other justifications for making a loan ("Here's the money. I trust you. I think you'll pay it back"). Jennings once said, "There are a limited number of banks in Oklahoma that are willing to aggressively pursue the oil-and-gas business." The key word—"aggressively"—implied that the old lending standards, the mandatory as well as the negative, need not apply in every case. A character banker could overlook the rules if they didn't fit the situation.

Having a friend like Beep Jennings offered one possible breach of the common barriers to independent oil-and-gas entrepreneurship. Otherwise, there was a more generally accessible path—an arrangement known as "third-for-a-quarter." (The term can be used as a noun, a verb, or an adjective.) Third-for-a-quarter is the garden variety of syndication that prevails throughout the Oklahoma-type independent oil-and-gas business and beyond. When you third-for-a-quarter a deal, you try to barter your labor for oil-and-gas production. In the lowest-common-denominator version, three passive investors share equally the cost of drilling a well. Each passive investor pays a third of the initial cost in the hope of getting back a quarter of the ultimate payoff, and the promoter hopes to earn the fourth quarter as a reward for his legwork and prospecting ability. The promoter's share in a third-for-a-quarter is usually referred to as "a carried interest" or "a free carry." Only the rare third-for-a-quarter, however, contains these basic ingredients and no other wrinkles. The specifics of any prospect will dictate its terms—mineral owners' royalties, back-in arrangements, overrides, discounted working-interest shares awarded to drilling contractors. Most third-for-a-quarters are said to go only as far as the "casing point"—the point at which steel pipe is placed in the hole to prepare for a "well completion," which enables oil or gas or both to flow from the reservoir to the surface. An operator or a promoter who has been carried to the casing point must share the costs of completing the well unless he has negotiated the right to be "carried all the way" or "carried to the tanks," which permits an expense-free ride clear to the bank.

I once heard a successful and candid oilman describe third-for-a-quarter as "a license to steal," but I told myself that this was a subjective observation and a fine specimen of cynical hyperbole. I told the candid oilman what I thought "third-for-a-quarter" meant: on a well that costs a million dollars, I put up nothing while three other guys each put up a third of a million and— The oilman cut me off, saying, "Yeah, well, that's what it says in the third-grade books, but when you get up in the sixth-grade books it's different." To illustrate his point, he walked me through a rigmarole whose rudiments were that to be successful in the oil-exploration business you did not have to turn up live hydrocarbons when you went exploring. You could third-for-a-quarter by raising a million three-three-three and drilling up only a million, and it didn't matter whether you found oil and gas, because, with material markups, inflated overhead, and creative cost overruns, you would still make out fine. "A guy who drills third-for-a-quarter figures that if he doesn't get lucky he at least wants to get rich. A lot of these guys lately were excellent promoters, but they weren't very good at finding oil and gas. But so what? Completing a well and getting production is nice. But getting rich up front is what this is all about."

When the candid oilman said "these guys lately," I knew that he meant the new oilies. The million-dollar wells that sold for a million three-three-three often had a former recreational-vehicle salesman working on the promotional side. In certain heavily explored areas of Oklahoma, the geology was so predictable that you had to go out of your way to get into trouble or to fail to "hit oil." These oil fields were new-oilie magnets. You just needed the right group of investors. Whoever was human and frail and willing and had five thousand dollars to spare would do. Finding a deal was no problem. You could sell it to your friends. You'd just get some money and go drill the damn well. Jerry knew Jim, who knew Larry from church, who used to sell real estate with Ken, who played golf every Sunday with Gary; Ken and Gary didn't go to church, but Gary knew three guys who got together a couple of months back and leased two hundred acres of minerals up in Kingfisher County, and there was an operator there who'd been doing fine drilling some shallow wells, and he'd have a rig free in two months. Many new oilies were sincere. It did not matter that the wells they drilled started out looking flashy but six months later dripped like a faucet with a worn-out washer. For a while, it did not matter that the price of oil would probably have to reach seventy dollars a barrel before their deals could make sense. They tended to complete a hundred per cent of the wells they drilled, never mind what the economics said. They were the gift of the boom, the new oilies. After turning a couple of deals, regardless of how much oil and gas materialized, an optimistic new oilie could begin to assume that he was creditworthy. And if he could befriend an uncharacteristically optimistic banker he would be.

EARLY believers in the deep potential of the Anadarko Basin—the zones below fifteen thousand feet—grew accustomed to seeing their enthusiasm translated into actual drilling only about once every four or five years. In 1946, in Caddo County, which is one of eleven Oklahoma counties situated above the Basin, Superior Oil drilled a well to seventeen thousand eight hundred and twenty-three feet—a world-record depth. Wire-line tests revealed the presence of hydrocarbons in a dozen different zones, or strata, but temperature problems made it impossible to complete the well and bring gas to the surface. Throughout the fifties and sixties, several major oil companies were persuaded to participate in deep wells in the region—Conoco in 1953, Gulf in 1957, Conoco again in 1961, Phillips in 1965. The Gulf venture, the Anadarko Basin No. 1, reached a total depth of twenty-one thousand twenty-one feet—another world record. Before the well could be completed, however, the crew blundered and cemented the drill pipe in the hole. Attempts to salvage the situation led to expensive misery and to repercussions. Major oil companies had supplied good portions of the money to drill these wells, but independents had done the work of identifying the prospects, assembling the acreage, trading the acreage to come up with whatever it took to participate in the wells themselves. Drilling the deepest hole in the world and coming up empty-handed did not make it easier to sell the next deal. Yet, doggedly, the next deal always emerged. In retrospect, every early deep well in the Anadarko seems to have been a necessary precursor of the ones that followed.

In Beckham County, near the heart of the Basin, a well called the No. 1 Green was begun, or "spudded," in late 1967, and was completed a year and a half later. It had distinctions: at twenty-four thousand four hundred and fifty-four feet, it was the second-deepest well ever drilled, and it was the first "ultra-deep" producer—four thousand feet deeper than any previous Anadarko producer. If left to flow unchoked, it would yield methane in auspicious quantities—twenty-four million cubic feet a day. Ultimately, the reserves would total at least fifteen billion cubic feet, the equivalent of two and a half million barrels of oil. The only ungratifying thing about the No. 1 Green, really, was that it was an economic calamity. Leasing, surveying, drilling, and completing it had cost six and a half million dollars, and its harvest sold for twenty-two cents per thousand cubic feet, which gave it a chance to recover only slightly more than half its cost. The well had been

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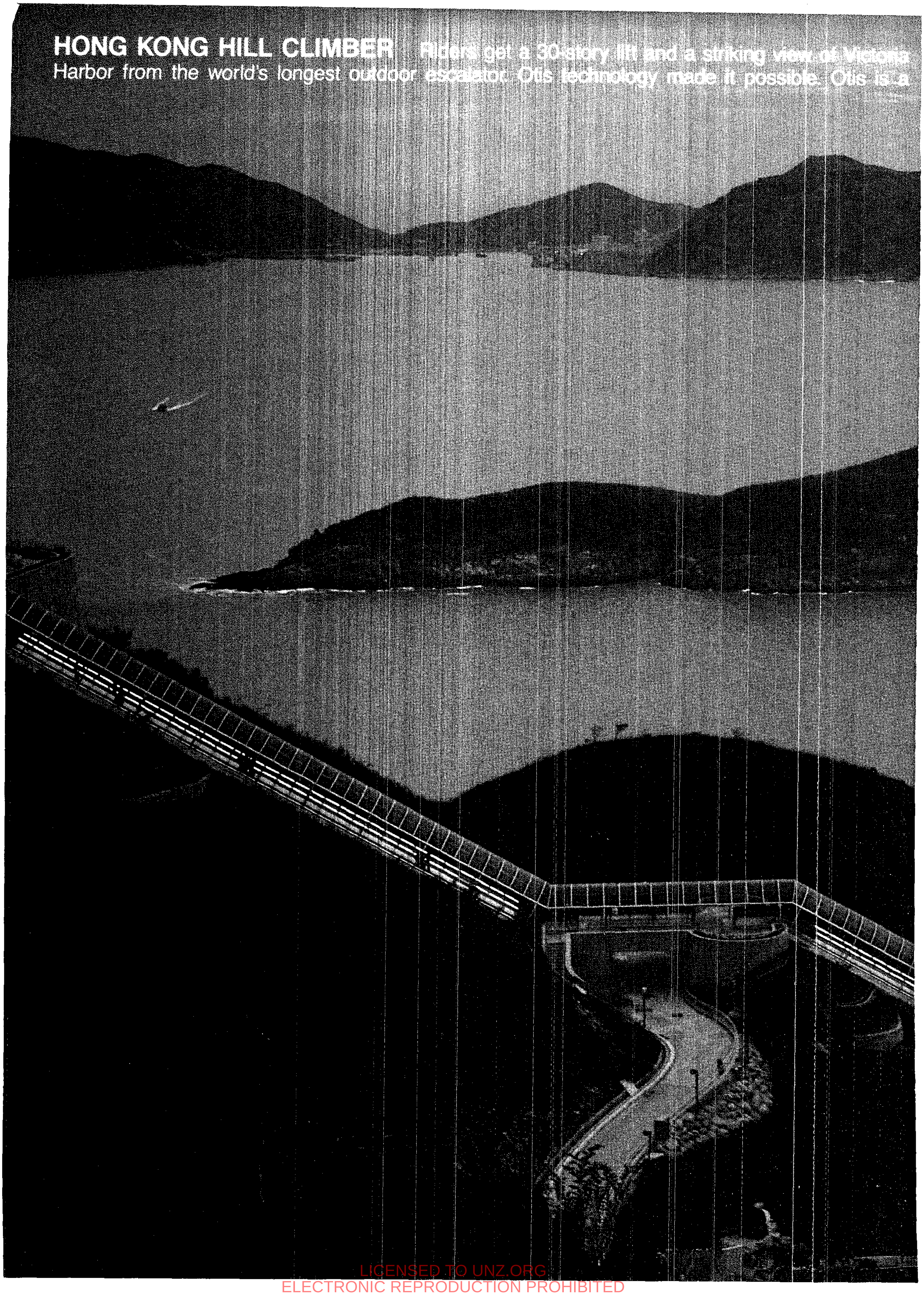

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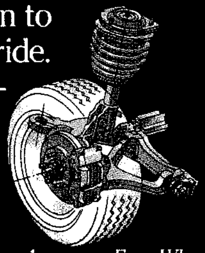

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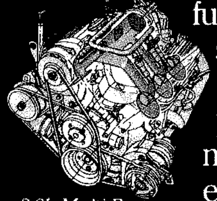

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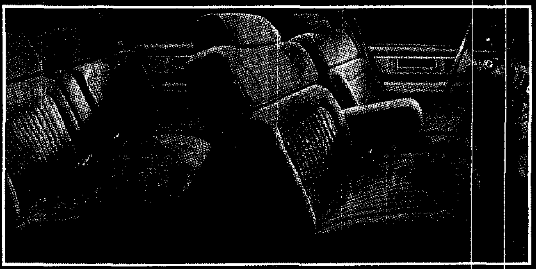
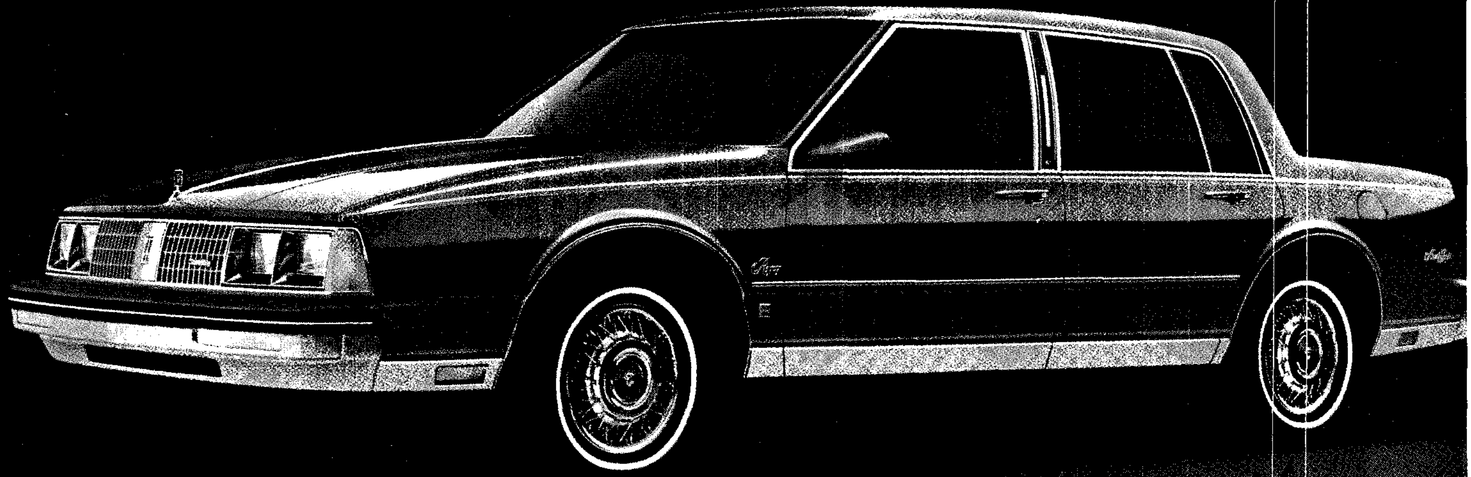




There is a special feel in an Oldsmobile

Let's get it together... buckle up.

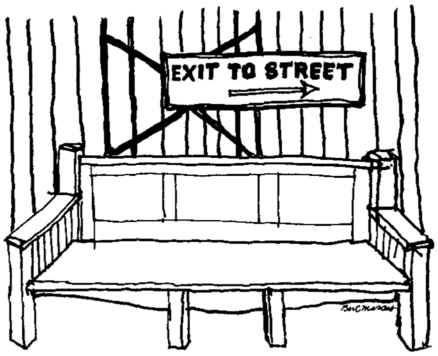
financed in large part by Sun Oil and Amerada Petroleum, but it was operated by the GHK Company, a small independent, whose managing partner was a thirty-four-year-old geologist named Robert Alexander Hefner III. On the strength, if you could call it that, of the No. 1 Green, Hefner—the "H" of GHK—emerged as the foremost propagandist for the deep Anadarko Basin. The deep Anadarko had not demonstrated any facility for making friends, nor did its few friends have many friends, nor did its best friend, Robert A. Hefner III, give a damn. Hefner believed in the superior power of his own beliefs. And, in an alarmingly quixotic way, he apparently believed that if you wanted to drill lots of holes five miles deep and deeper you ran the risk of self-destruction, but that self-destruction was perhaps not such a terrible thing if you could manage it with style.

The "G" and the "K" of GHK were, respectively, Laurence Glover and David O'D. Kennedy, both of whom lived in New York. Hefner and Glover had met in 1961, in a waiting room outside an office on Park Avenue, where each happened to show up because the gentleman whose office it was had substantial funds and neither of them did. Like Hefner, Glover had considerable personal appeal. He was tall, lean, ruddy, and handsome. Although he was born in Massachusetts, he had lived for several years in England and, as a result, was more often taken for a retired Royal Navy officer than for an oil-and-gas promoter. Glover and an earlier, moneyed partner—a White Russian émigré named Vadim Makaroff—had participated in the fruitless Anadarko Basin No. 1, in 1957. Five years later—by which time Glover had introduced Hefner to Makaroff, and Makaroff, in turn, had become friendly with Kennedy, who was the principal owner of Kentile Floors—the four men created a partnership that invested in another Anadarko wildcat well, the Weatherly. The Weatherly was deep and dry. Its investors, however, earned shares in a large block of undeveloped Anadarko leases. Before long, Makaroff died, and Kennedy bought the Anadarko mineral interests in his estate. With what now amounted to an inventory of about a hundred thousand acres, GHK was born—a partnership that would levitate for years on Kennedy's sound credit, Glover's impeccable manners and deadly skill as a pigeon-stalker, and, above all, Hefner's evangelism in the name of the deep Anadarko Basin.

Hefner was a splendid study in self-study, a fully realized persona. In Oklahoma, if you were going to attempt certain stunts it helped enormously to be a Hefner—a genus that, locally, passed for royalty. Hefner's grandfather, the original Robert A. Hefner, consistently delivered himself to the right place at the right time: to Beaumont, Texas, in 1903, on the heels of the blowout of the Spindletop well, which ignited the East Texas oil bonanza; to Ardmore, Oklahoma, soon after statehood, where he established an oil-and-gas law practice that benefitted from the opening of the great Healdton Field; to Oklahoma City in the late twenties, just a year before the Oklahoma City No. 1 came in.

A biography of the family's founder, titled "The Judge"—he served a six-year term as a justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, though his friends had called him Judge long before he became one—was issued some years ago by the Oklahoma Heritage Association, which is housed today in the Hefner family manse, in Oklahoma City. According to this book, Judge Hefner narrowly escaped penury early in his legal career when, in reckless self-sacrifice, he undertook a contingent-fee case on behalf of four Choctaw families who felt that they had been deprived of their tribal land allotments; although the Judge won the case, his clients turned out to be ingrates. He bounced back and went on to write the seminal state property laws pertaining to the sale of minerals.

Reading "The Judge," one learns that by the time the protagonist began his Supreme Court term, in 1927, he owned almost fifty thousand acres of surface and minerals, mainly in southern Oklahoma. After retiring from the court, he served two terms as mayor of Oklahoma City and more than dabbled in the law, the oil business, and real estate. Along the way, he made only one mistake. That happened in 1934, when he sold to an oil operator from New York City the "deep" rights to all his minerals in Carter County. Everything below four thousand feet he gave up for ten dollars an acre. Drilling below four thousand feet in southern Oklahoma was unthinkable, because the Judge had not yet lived long enough to know better. His biographer notes that the Hefner Company, the concern he founded, never went outside its own treasury to come up with operating capital. When the eldest of the Judge's children, Robert, Jr., semi-retired, a few years ago, he gave a newspaper interview that included this quotation: "There is one thing I'm proud of. I have never borrowed one cent and never had a promoted dollar in my business. I have always dealt on what I have. But things are different in the oil field now."



After Judge Hefner, no one had trouble remembering the family name. In Oklahoma City, it was attached to a water reservoir, a park, a junior high school, a nursing home, a baseball field, street signs. Judge Hefner died in 1971, at the age of ninety-six. He lived long enough to witness his grandson's effort to take the family legend a lot deeper than four thousand feet. The grandson, to get there, was willing to borrow or promote whatever dollars happened to be available.

When Robert A. Hefner III was born, in 1935, his parents lived in Washington, D.C. As a child, he was called Bobby, and he has never quite outgrown the name: business associates call him Bob or Robert; his detractors complain about Bobby Hefner this and Bobby Hefner that. His monogram—stitched in blue on his French cuffs, stitched in gold on the insteps of his velvet formal pumps, embossed in silver on the matchbooks in his home—contains no initials, just a III. When Bobby Hefner was very young, his parents divorced and his mother settled in California. He did his growing up in Beverly Hills, and did not arrive in Oklahoma to stay until he was a freshman at the University of Oklahoma. He earned a bachelor's degree in geology and, in the process, took a course in stratigraphy that influenced all his future thinking.

The professor who taught stratigraphy enabled Hefner later to understand continental drift and plate tectonics, the crustal shifts that might in theory have deposited thick layers of hydrocarbon-saturated sediments deep in the Anadarko Basin. This theory appealed to Hefner even more as he became convinced that methane would soon sell for sixty cents per thousand cubic feet. Sixty cents was four or five multiples of its price at the time. Years later, when a journalist printed and others repeated that while Hefner was at the university he had written a thesis on the potential of the deep Anadarko, Hefner made no effort to correct this statement. His thesis did not exist on paper. It was a portable postulatum that went wherever he went, a proposition that he unspooled for any willing audience, exposing it, refining it, believing it more and more intensely.

If deep-gas exploration had made economic sense as early as the nineteen-sixties, Hefner's devotion to the Basin would have been unremarkable; he would have been forced to line up behind the major oil companies, along with all the other independent promoters. Nature had behaved capriciously where deep Anadarko zones had been tested, but the existence of deep gas in western Oklahoma should have been neither debatable nor mysterious. Unreconstructed oilmen and government bureaucrats had the most difficulty accepting the idea that the gas was there. One easy way to offend Hefner was to refer to him as an oilman. Crude-oil production shared a future with whaling. Natural gas—methane, a carbon atom bound to four hydrogen atoms—was the ticket. Hefner preached energy self-sufficiency through the divine gift of methane. He would pound the tabletop and say, "I learned early on that I couldn't talk to my father and my grandfather, because I had knowledge that they didn't have, that they couldn't see. They were *oil*men. Oil and gas are distinct in every way—geologically, technologically, politically." Nurturing the Anadarko Basin's full mythical potential was to become his greatest accomplishment. Manipulation could make real its economic potential. The myth that deep gas did not exist Hefner combatted with the myth that the Anadarko Basin held the key to the salvation of the planet.

Hefner was hard to resist. He had Apollonian good looks. His suits and shirts came from Savile Row, his neckties from Hermès. His coloring was Nordic, and his facial features seemed a cross between Native American and Leading Man. Part of him was a grim, drawn, clench-mouthed philosopher and part was a voluble, exuberant salesman. He had a straight nose that flattened across the bridge, a broad, strong jaw, thin lips, and a bright, startling smile, often accompanied by a hollow laugh. Hefner's gray-blue eyes, full of intelligence, could widen and sparkle and obtrude and then quickly retract and focus upon something inward or distant. When windblown, his long, fine, finger-combed blond hair looked just right. His skin looked as if he never needed to shave. To burnish the myth, he perfected his social skills. He sailed in the Caribbean and off Newport in his yacht, the Anadarko, summered and wintered in Aspen, went to the races at Churchill Downs and Ascot, hunted grouse with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, squired actresses and heiresses, made the New York society columns, and graciously assumed the burdens of being Oklahoma's contribution to the fast track. He was acquainted with everyone everywhere. Frequently, after a digression, the floor was littered with names.

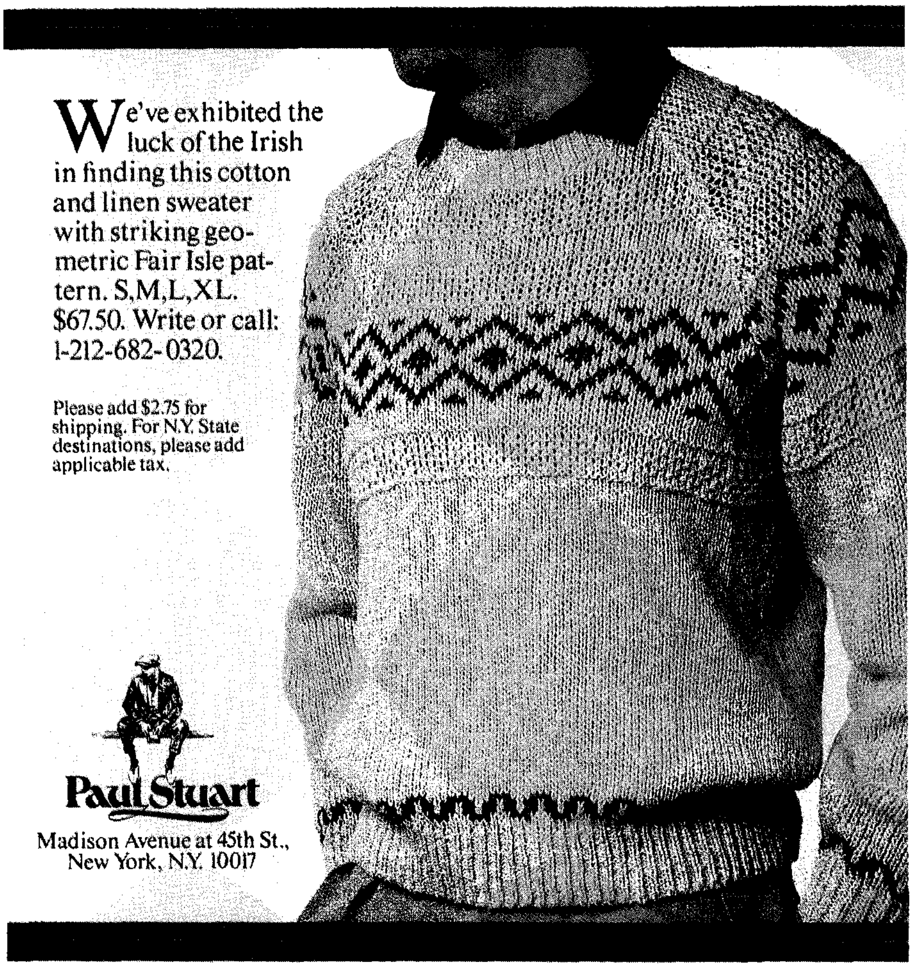
To get at the reality of Hefner—to sort out the distractions and understand that *your* money was needed to underwrite *his* ambition, because, appearances notwithstanding, he was usually broke—you first had to penetrate the verbal agility and the luminous persona. Geologist-as-artist-hero was the identity that he had selected. After college, he spent a year in Phillips Petroleum's training program. He learned more geology and he learned about seismic contouring and well-site economics. A tour in Phillips' economic-analysis section convinced him that, as he put it recently, "no one there cared about gas; their economic analyses were entirely based upon the wellhead price of oil." He left Phillips. For six months, he was employed by the Hefner Company, the firm that his grandfather founded. When he left there, in 1959, he was twenty-four, a divorced father with custody of a girl and two boys (including Robert A. Hefner IV). His stated intention was to become a consulting geologist. His father gave him a microscope and lent him thirty thousand dollars. The money went to buy leases in the Anadarko Basin.

During the sixties and early seventies, Hefner was able to lease mineral rights by paying bonuses of between ten and twenty-five dollars an acre, the object being to farm them out—to persuade capable exploration companies to drill on those leases and carry GHK for a free ride. The world around Hefner had trouble figuring out whether he was ahead of his time or just pathological in a diverting way. He seemed free of self-doubt. He remarried, his second wife being a wealthy woman whose father warned her against exposing her inheritance to Hefner's majestic vision. (The marriage lasted twelve years.) Once, he sold a car to pay a grocery bill. Other bills he managed to ignore. But if his faith waned, he failed to show it. A banker who chose not to do business with Hefner remembers visits from him when he was trying to raise money to drill the No. 1 Green. "His eyes were on fire," the banker said. "He always struck me as one of those guys just on the line between insane and brilliant. I didn't lend him money, because of his reputation. He'd never *made* any money. He was always drilling with *other* people's money. He was talking about producing deep gas when gas was selling for fifteen cents. I didn't care how many trillion feet of gas there were in the deep Anadarko, you weren't going to make money at that price. Everyone thought he was a fool. I don't know how he got away with it as long as he did. Maybe he knew that you had to have some deep gas first, to prove it was there. So he drilled the No. 1 Green. It was *uneconomical*, period. It was other people's money. He was trying to prove the gas was there and he was dead right. But *then* what?"

The Penn Square Bank first lent money to Hefner in 1977. Beep Jennings remembers the amount as three hundred thousand dollars. When he was asked not long ago to describe the state of Hefner's financial affairs at the time of the loan, he said, "They were strained." Tact was one of Jennings' many virtues: the loan officer to whom Jennings delegated Hefner's account recalls looking at a financial statement and concluding that "the guy's company was broke to the tune of twelve million dollars." Jennings had enough banking experience to be broad-minded. Insolvency was just one of those things that could befall a busy man. When Jennings was an officer of the Fidelity Bank, the Kerr-McGee bank downtown, the president had been a friendly man named Grady Harris. Speaking of Hefner, Grady Harris had once said to Jennings, "He'll be the wealthiest oil-and-gas producer in Oklahoma or he'll be broke." Around that time, Grady Harris had lent Hefner money. Somewhat later, Grady Harris was forced to dislodge Hefner from his office in the Fidelity Bank's building. (The matter concerned nonpayment of several months' rent, and Grady Harris did not do the actual dislodging; he gave that job to Jennings.) By the time Hefner went to Jennings at Penn Square and asked for a loan, he had forgiven and forgotten. Evidently, he did not hold the dislodging against Jennings, any more than he held it against him that Jennings had a mere moneymaking concept, while he, Hefner, had a blueprint for saving the universe. Hefner ascendant was exactly the sort of risk that Jennings loved to bank.

Encouraged by Hefner, Jennings expanded and clarified his thoughts about energy lending and merchant banking. Intelligent opinion had it that fifteen trillion cubic feet of natural gas was trapped within the Anadarko Basin. And what if the true figure was two hundred trillion? Hefner could imagine that as well. Deftly, Hefner coaxed Jennings, delivering in installments a message that added up to this: Penn Square, as a merchant bank, was in a position to do more than simply lend money and sell loans. Trillions of cubic feet of gas meant billions of dollars. Jennings should push his concept as far as possible. He should go to London, Paris—get to know the right people at Barclays, Westminster, Paribas. The American banking and energy-exploration businesses were on the brink of deregulation; the world economy was in need of regeneration. With methane, a plentiful source of clean, safe energy, the world would sail into the twenty-first century. Hefner told Jennings to think of Oklahoma City as Athens. A dazzling opportunity—and a vacuum—existed. Once the architecture of the dream had been drafted, the billions of dollars would rush into the vacuum.

You would need real architecture, of course, a real edifice, and they discussed that, too. According to the Jennings-Hefner view of reality, the PennBank Tower would become the locus of methane financing until at least the mid-twenty-first century. Eventually, along with some other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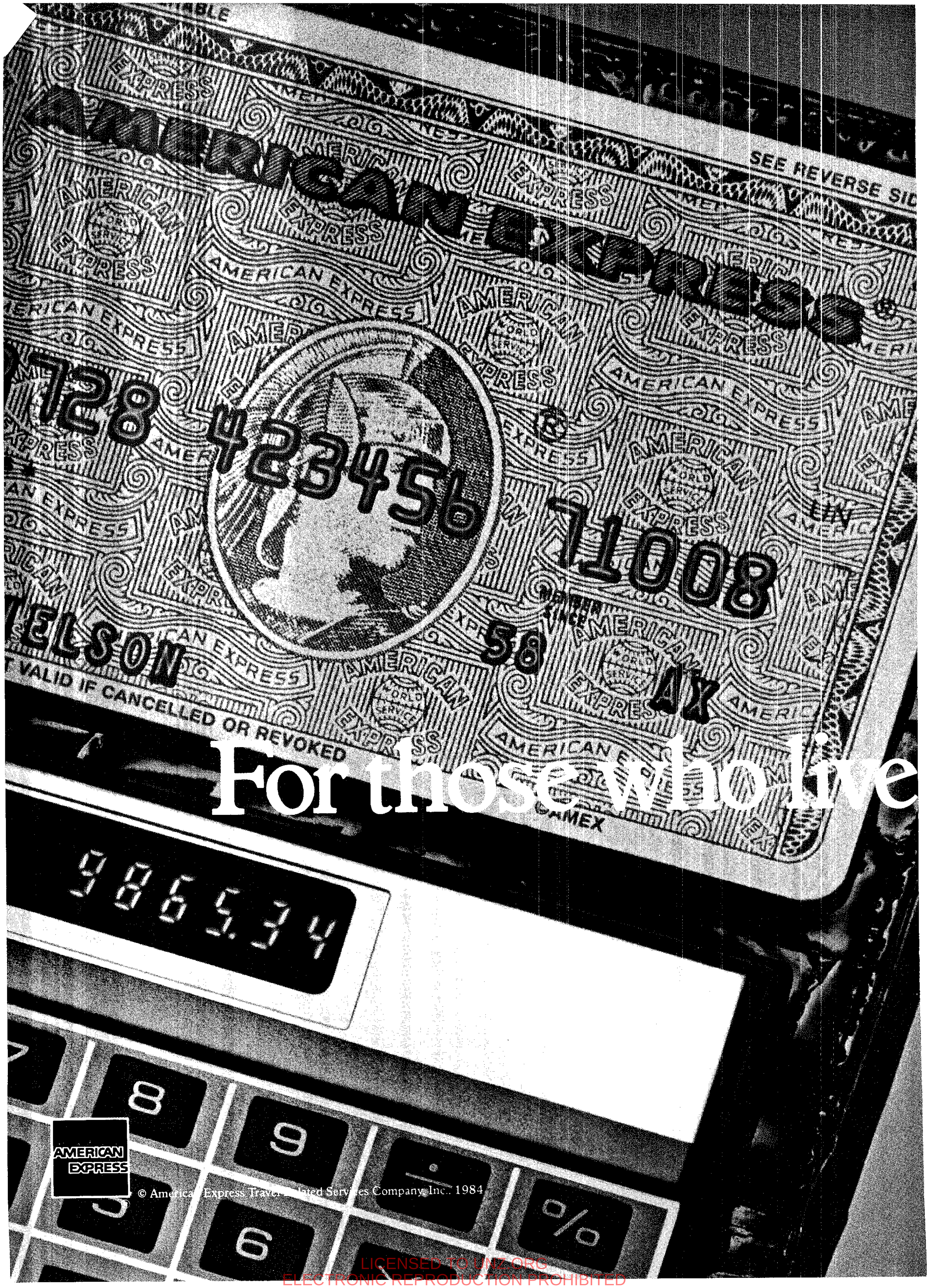
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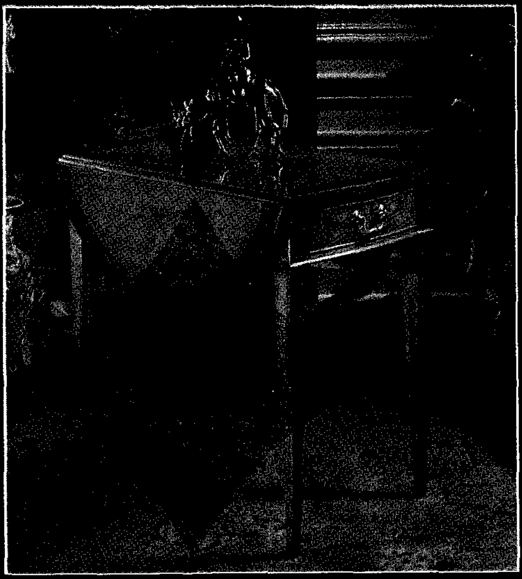

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partners, they started building it—a twenty-two-story box the color of fired red clay, sheathed in amber glass, with a crown of angled trapezoids, planted in a V-shaped gap between Route 66 and a suburban expressway, a stone's throw and a half from the Penn Square shopping center. GHK and the Penn Square Bank would become the main tenants. (GHK intended to occupy eight floors, and would presumably never be threatened with eviction.) What Jennings and Hefner could not foresee was that the PennBank Tower would near completion just as the bank failed. The tower was destined to become more memorable as artifact than as architecture. Only after I had driven past it several times a week for several months did I notice that there was a McDonald's next door. The McDonald's forced me to regard the tower more sympathetically; at least they had tried. It might have worked in another context. In that part of Oklahoma City, regrettably, it had a stranded look, like a temporarily grounded interplanetary vehicle, an expensive metaphor. It was out of place, the way the Penn Square Bank began to be out of place when Jennings decided that it no longer had to be just a little shopping-center bank. While the blueprints were still being drafted, however, only bright hopes seemed called for. The Penn Square Bank, steeped in expertise, more knowledgeable about the geology of the Anadarko Basin than any other financial institution, would funnel the capital that would make dreams real. Getting the gas out of the ground presented some logistical challenges, but if you could do that Oklahoma City could become, if not Athens, perhaps a dry-land Strait of Hormuz, a conduit through which things of great value must flow.

Jennings and Hefner, grandiloquent optimist and Olympian believer—did Jennings believe two hundred trillion cubic feet? "I heard numbers," Jennings has recalled. "I believed that if they were one-quarter what Bob Hefner said, once the economics were in place the possibilities were tremendous. I accepted his concept of the Anadarko Basin. I thought he was the most visionary oilman I'd ever met, and I've met a lot. I liked his style. Bob Hefner discussed with me more than anybody else the potential of the Anadarko Basin, and I considered him the foremost developer of the Anadarko Basin. And I sat through presentations by him and his personnel during which they outlined their estimates of the potential of the Basin. Let's say that I was highly motivated by Bob Hefner's opinion." Hefner needed Jennings to be motivated. Whether Jennings truly believed what Hefner told him did not matter. Jennings was the first banker who had ever paid sustained attention. That mattered. Already, Hefner had leased a hundred and seventy thousand acres in the Basin, and now that the price of energy was moving up, there was every reason to lease as much as possible. "You furnish the ship, I'll furnish the ocean" was the promise of the proverbial promoter. If Jennings could find the money, Hefner could find the gas. The gas, after all, was there.

THE October, 1981, issue of *Wellhead*—a magazine that ceased publication a couple of years ago—included an article that said, in part:

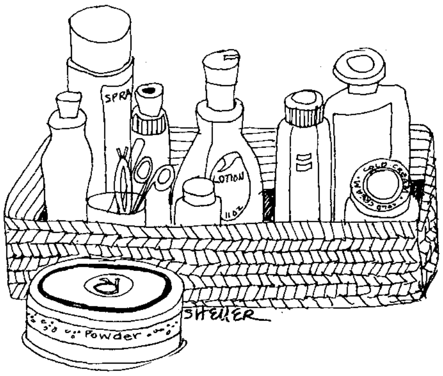
> Most often a man is measured by his achievements. Occasionally, a man is measured by his achievements and his intrinsic nature. That part of a man that cannot be found in a biographical sketch, résumé or bank account, but which is more the man than any or all of his accomplishments. When a man measures up in both categories, he is unique. He is what America is about.

I read on, and learned about J. D. Allen, "one of those special men who are the foundation on which this great country thrives." J. D. Allen was "more than words on a page that list his many accomplishments; more than the sum total of the worth of the companies he operates; more than the balance at the bank. He is unique." J. D. Allen was "a successful businessman, measured by his achievements over the last twenty years . . . a man that will listen to the new idea that presents a unique opportunity in the world of business . . . will always recognize the imminent importance of people." J. D. Allen was "the core of humanity, the crux of the American way of life."

In measuring Allen's achievements over the last twenty years, the editors of *Wellhead* had totted up everything he had accomplished since the age of fourteen. That was no minor accomplishment in itself, for Allen was a person who frequently came up with the new angle, the bold innovation. Allen grew up in Ringling, the only town in southern Oklahoma named after a circus. Ringling was only seven miles from Healdton, where the Jennings family owned the bank. Allen's father had taught at Ringling High School, where he supervised the Future Farmers of America chapter, and had later acquired an interest in a feed store and an automobile dealership. And he knew Beep Jennings—not well, but well enough.

There was a time in Allen's life when he decided that he wanted to become J.D.—that he no longer cared to answer to his given name, which was Jerry Dale. Years later, when certain people who had known him in Ringling or at the University of Oklahoma heard about J. D. Allen or read in the newspapers about J. D. Allen they would not immediately grasp that J. D. Allen and Jerry Dale Allen were the same person. Not until he became J.D. did he grow a Clark Gable mustache and start wearing his dark hair in a wavy pouf. When he became J.D., his dimpled face grew rounder and his physique filled out to light-heavyweight dimensions. Many of the brothers in Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Allen's college fraternity, had called him Ringling. A Sig Alph once told me, "Ringling was his main nickname. In pledge class, they'd call him terrible names and it wouldn't even faze him. You know how they do it to everybody. After about a minute of it, Jerry Dale would have this silly grin on his face. Like it wasn't happening to him. Either it didn't bother him or he didn't understand what was going on."

Allen's fraternity brothers underestimated him. Very few saw that he had the ability to become the core of humanity, co-chairman of the finance committee of the Republican National Committee, and a friend of Wayne Newton, a couple of Presidents of the United States, and other significant public figures. Allen himself had no serious doubts about his talents. He once reflected, "Success and money just come naturally to me." A former business associate of his has said, "Numbers never intimidated him. You know how a lot of smart people are intimidated by their own capabilities? Well, J.D. never had that problem." Anyone who neglected to predict that big things would happen to Jerry Dale Allen had simply not been paying attention. During college, Jerry Dale and a partner sold industrial-strength floor wax, wax stripper, and all-purpose cleaner along fraternity row; ran a business called Party Pics, which specialized in taking candid photographs of happy couples at fraternity and sorority parties; and maintained a franchise of several vending and pinball machines. "Pinball," Allen once said to me, pausing and puffing cigar smoke in a pensive way. "That's where the money was."



The autobiography that J. D. Allen enjoyed reciting had an early chapter in Burkburnett, Texas, in 1961, when he was fourteen years old. He had roughnecked and hauled hay in southern Oklahoma and northern Texas. Not far from Burkburnett, he noticed a ridge where several oil wells had been drilled. In the gully below the ridge, there were no wells. Talking to the old-timers at the coffee shop in town, he learned that the existing wells had been drilled by steam-driven rigs and that the gully had been dammed to create a water reservoir for the boilers. So Allen leased the gully, found some partners who had money, and drilled three shallow wells, all productive. By the time he finished high school, according to the autobiography, he was making more money than his parents.

Not that Allen's career was a series of unalloyed successes. There was, for example, the low moment when he was eighteen years old and the Old Red River flooded. Water seeped into and ruined a couple of wells that had already been completed. Allen was forced to sell the lease, and he still did not have enough to pay his bills. He went to see a banker in Ryan, Oklahoma, and was told that, as a minor, he was not legally responsible for his debts and therefore had nothing to worry about. "He told me I could just forget about it," Allen said. "I told him, 'I don't live that way.' He says, 'I guess if you'll pay them other guys back you'll pay me.' " Whereupon the banker lent Allen the money he needed. To quote *Wellhead*, "J.D.'s credo for doing business: 'A man's word is his honor and without that you don't have anything.' "

During his senior year of college, Allen signed up for on-campus job interviews with recruiters from several oil companies. "At the end of the interview, they'd always ask you how high you wanted to go with them," Allen recalled. "One time, a guy asked me 'How high do you think you want to go with this company?' and I said, 'I plan to own it.' Matter of fact, I told the guy from Mobil I planned to be chairman of the board. He said, 'Do you think there's a chance you could ever become president of Mobil?' I said, 'Nope. Chairman of the board.' "

For four years, Allen worked for Mobil, in the exploration-and-producing department, based in the company's offices in Houston and Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1974, by which time he had not quite completed his ascent to the boardroom, he went into business for himself. He had been married and divorced, he owned a new Oldsmobile Cutlass (burgundy with a white interior), and he was about to become chairman and chief executive officer of a company called L-X Exploration. "I remembered how Exxon said they chose that name for themselves because they found out 'x' was the most remembered letter in the alphabet," Allen told me, describing the strategic planning that preceded the founding of L-X Exploration. "So I started with the X and just went through the alphabet—A, B, C, D, E—till I hit a letter that sounded good with X. That was it. L-X."

The trunk of the burgundy Cutlass became the L-X Exploration main office, and the white interior became Allen's home. L-X specialized in lease-and-royalty trading in several southern and western Texas counties. Exploration companies always lease more acreage than they can drill themselves, so they "farm it out." For a negotiated price or some future consideration—it all depends on the attractiveness of the prospect—they assign a "farmout," or leasehold, to a broker or another operator. The broker or operator who obtains the farmout is thereby making a commitment that a well will be drilled within a prescribed period of time. Buying and trading farmouts, which was to become one of Allen's subspecialties, is a form of betting on the come, and if you cannot unload the merchandise it becomes risky. A busy lease broker might end up doing a lot of sleeping in cars, although one does not necessarily have to end up domiciled in a car. Sleeping in the Cutlass did not damage Allen's Okiesmo, but it did give him backaches. He traded for a baby-blue Cadillac, which was roomier and more comfortable. His address was Box JDA, Ringling, Oklahoma. Sometimes he slept in Midland or Dallas. "I was just doing deals," he said. "I've always liked women. I really like women. If you're in the oil business, who do you date? Oil-company secretaries. I'd get them to do my typing when I needed it."

One day during the summer of 1976, Allen and Beep Jennings both happened to attend a wedding in Dallas. They chatted about business, and Jennings came away impressed by Allen's account of how much he had been hustling and how well he was doing. Jennings said, more or less, "I own the Penn Square Bank in Oklahoma City now. Next time you're up there, come on by." The fact was that Allen had already dropped by the Penn Square Bank and had arranged a modest loan—less than thirty thousand dollars—secured by some leases and oil-and-gas production. Encouraged by Jennings, he returned a few weeks later, intending to borrow more. This time, he made the mistake of subjecting himself to the scrutiny of a loan officer who did not realize that Ringling was only seven miles from Healdton. Allen wanted sixty thousand dollars to buy some leases. When the loan officer took a look at the collateral that he had to offer—leases, oil-and-gas production, and accounts receivable—his response was that securing the collateral might take some time. Because Allen felt that he did not have time to spare, and because he had been led to assume that borrowing money at Penn Square would not lead to an invasion of his privacy, he went directly to the chairman of the board. Very soon thereafter, Jennings extended to Allen a hundred-thousand-dollar line of credit for lease purchases.

Within a few months, Allen had paid back the hundred thousand. Next, he borrowed two hundred thousand dollars to pick up some acreage in southern Texas. Unexpectedly, he encountered obstacles when he tried to resell the leases. What another banker might have regarded as a potential problem loan Jennings regarded as an opportunity. In Allen he saw someone who, as he later described him, had "unique instant conceptual abilities"—a mover who, you might say, could transport himself from A to C without passing through B. It occurred to Jennings that with a more stable home address, a telephone, an office unencumbered by a spare tire, adequate financing, and a bit of guidance, Allen could cover great distances in effortless leaps. It occurred to Jennings to introduce his new friend Jerry Dale Allen to his old friend Carl Swan.

CARL SWAN was more beloved than Jennings. Nice as Jennings was, compared with Carl Swan he came off tougher than beef jerky. Simply by being associated with Jennings, Swan did him a big favor: he made Jennings seem almost coldly ruthless, and thus enhanced his reputation as a banker. What a thoughtful way to give a pal a boost! Everybody in the oil business knew Swan, and everybody liked him. A drilling contractor who was a friend of both Swan and Jennings said, "You could play poker over the telephone with either one of those guys." Swan loved horses and good whiskey, he was nice to ladies, and he was honest, as in "Carl Swan's basically an honest person, you know," or "Carl's reasonably honest"—encomiums that happen to be the two most exalting character references in the Kingdom of Okiesmo. There were all those young men Carl Swan boosted when they were just getting started. There were cocktail waitresses and accountants, lounge hounds and you-name-its out there, and Swan had gone to bat for a bunch of them. He had guaranteed their loans, he had invested in their enterprises, he *believed* in people. His reward was a world of loyal affection. A chronic co-signer is what Swan was. If you asked all the people who admired Swan whether he had any bad habits, they would mention one: he was too easy a touch.

Carl Swan had made some money. In 1964, after spending almost two decades working for other people—as field hand, floorman, roughneck, derrick man, mud engineer, and mud salesman—Swan set out on his own. Along with a couple of partners, he formed a company called Basin Drilling. The principal asset was a ten-thousand-foot-capacity drilling rig, which Swan had bought for thirty-five thousand dollars after mortgaging his house. A couple of years later, assisted by some established oilmen from Tulsa and Odessa, Texas, Swan and his partners merged with a small shell company and created a new enterprise, called Basin Petroleum. During the next several years, Basin focussed much of its activity on an area of north-central Oklahoma known as the Sooner Trend. "Anyone who drilled in the Sooner Trend and used a little judgment did pretty well," Swan later said. "We did well." In the process, Swan was becoming asset-rich. He owned thirty per cent of Basin Petroleum's stock, and, in 1976, when Basin was bought by Reserve Oil & Gas, a large California independent oil company, his in-the-ground assets became liquid assets. Swan's share of the sale proceeds was ten million dollars. Reserve Oil & Gas was itself subsequently taken over by Getty Oil, which in turn got bought by Texaco, in 1984, for ten billion one hundred million dollars. In retrospect, Swan's ten million dollars does not stack up as a bottomless fortune, but it happened to be ten million dollars more than he had in the bank when Basin Drilling was born. A story went around that one of the other Basin partners, when asked what Swan intended to do with his new money, replied, "Well, Carl might like to make a billion dollars."

A good friend of Swan's once said, "Carl's the most likable guy in the world. If you like cigars." By chance or by design, photographs of Swan rarely showed him without a cigar—a long one. A cigar nicely complemented the rest of him. He had a sturdy, member-of-the-posse physique, dark-reddish-brown hair, a walrus mustache, long sideburns, corn-fed cheeks—stolidity and no pretense. Ostentation was foreign to Swan. What you saw was what there was—except for the money. You did not see that on the surface, because Swan lived true to the heartland etiquette which ordained that, watching two men walk down the street, you should not be able to tell whose pockets were deeper. Swan and his friends spent long evenings at Junior's—an Oklahoma City restaurant that during Penn Square's happiest hours became the sanctum sanctorum of new-oilie-ism. A remark frequently heard at their table was "He's a great oil finder." Swan's admirers knew that he had gravitated from the source of all Okiesmo—the side of the oil business where you physically got dirty. His years of toil as roughneck and mudman conferred dignity on his fresh wealth. Although he was born in Missouri and had lived in Kansas and New Mexico, the Oklahoma oilies saw him as a home-town hero. Drilling all those fine Sooner Trend producers in the nineteen-sixties and seventies had ennobled him. The backing that Swan had received from his friends in Tulsa and Odessa when he formed Basin Petroleum made a permanent impression—made him ripe for the easy touch.

One of the first people to join the board of the Penn Square Bank after Jennings bought it was Swan. That was in 1976, a year in which Swan's financial statement began to make him resemble a one-man conglomerate. A new independent oil-and-gas-exploration company, Swan Petroleum, was formed that year, as were several other ventures that could not help making money once they had, say, a Carl Swan co-signing in the background. Swan demonstrated his optimism by investing in real estate, restaurants, coal, cattle, silver, gypsum, office buildings, electronics, a travel agency, a commuter airline, a night club. He owned a big horse farm south of Oklahoma City, and his horses raced at tracks all around the Southwest. "Carl's philosophy was: If I have enough going on, something's going to work out," a friend said. "He'll give people the benefit of the doubt every single time. I don't think Carl ever purposely got into a deal that he knew was rotten."

When Beep Jennings brought together Carl Swan and J. D. Allen, J.D. had a hundred thousand acres of leases in southern Texas and no money to drill them up. Swan had some underutilized space in his office. Jennings did not need to propose anything specific; Carl and J.D. could figure out a way to fill in the blanks.

"Why J. D. Allen?" Jennings was asked later.

"I thought he was one hell of an oil finder," Jennings replied. "I was not thinking of what J.D. could do for Carl—it was what Carl could do for J.D."

Old oilies would ask, "Who the hell is J. D. Allen?" The answer was: J. D. Allen is a friend of Carl Swan. Jennings could see that Allen was not a stopper and pauser and weigher of relative equities. Allen had just enough Ringling in him to say, "Now, Carl 'n' me is gonna *drill* these wells, see. So you wan' in or you wan' out?" The significant phrase was "Carl 'n' me." Allen was ready to roll; he just needed a Carl Swan on his letterhead. With a nudge in the proper direction, Allen stood a chance of becoming highly bankable.

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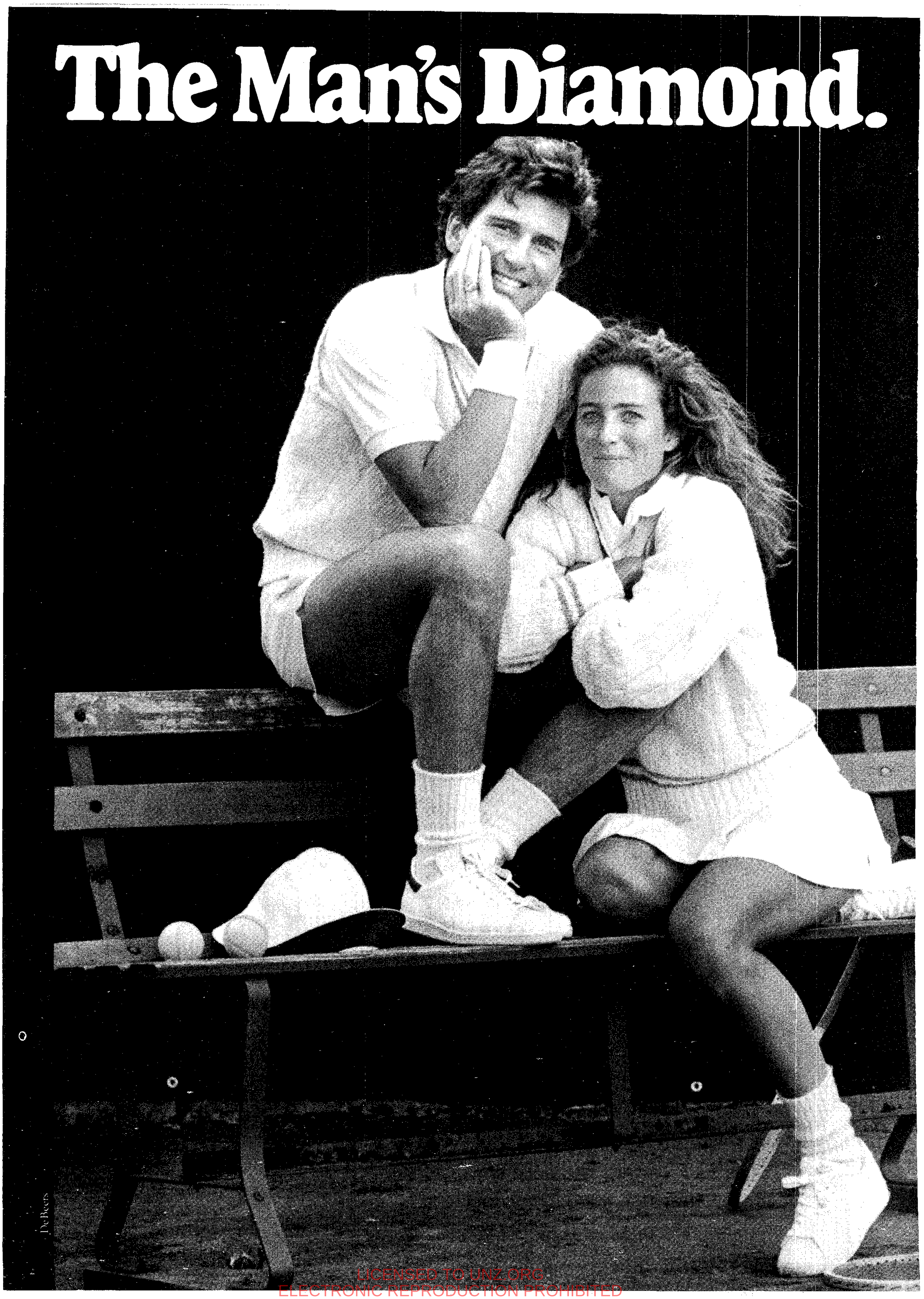
TO hatch and execute a successful disaster demands a sustained level of competence and dependability that is, by definition, unavailable to an average group of would-be conspirators. That is why calculated calamities are rare achievements and why, no matter what many of us often insist on believing, thieving conspiracies can almost never be built to last. Coincidence, meanwhile—four vehicles without headlights, all travelling at different speeds, converging on an unmarked intersection at dusk—gets less credit than it deserves. Entropy, random natural chaos, innate stupidity—all are important sources and forces of destruction and all are underrated.

Monstrously funny consequences grew out of the fear of OPEC. By the standards of American anti-trust law, which happened not to apply in this case, the OPEC cartel fitted the description of an open-and-shut price-fixing conspiracy. The fixers did not even have the decency to operate in secrecy, and look what they could get away with. The cartel's brazenness became one of its most threatening weapons. Morality was offended; in the spring of 1977, the President of the United States said so, in a memorable speech. Jimmy Carter raised the spectre of "national catastrophe." He said that the sacrifices demanded by "the energy crisis" called for "the moral equivalent of war." A barrel of OPEC oil then cost about thirteen dollars—ten dollars more than it had before 1973 but only about a third of the level it would reach in 1981. The boldest visionaries believed that forty-dollar-a-barrel crude was not the potential problem. Eighty-dollar or ninety-dollar oil by 1990, or whatever the cartel desired—that was the problem. In 1977, the United States spent forty-five billion dollars to import oil. It seemed at the time that if inertia ruled and consumption and prices kept escalating, by 1985 the figure would be five hundred and fifty billion. (As things have turned out, of course, the volume of imports has come to far less than that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—at least five hundred billion dollars less.)

The President made more speeches. He spoke, on the one hand, of the imperative to conserve, to plan ahead, to reduce. Then, to mitigate his heresy against the godliness of bigness, the President declared, on the other hand, that Americans had to discover more oil. When the oil-and-gas producers heard this, they said that more exploration demanded greater incentives. You would need, first, to eliminate the price regulations that allowed American producers to receive only two-thirds of what OPEC received for a barrel of oil. To achieve this patriotic payoff, you needed virtually endless lines of credit. You needed bankers.

I once heard a bankruptcy lawyer declaim, "See, bankers got into the oil business late. Bankers are always several years behind the rest of the planet." I regarded this as misinformed class bigotry, because it implied that bankers are universally naïve and vulnerable when in fact many have the potential to be as imaginative as any bankruptcy lawyer. After 1973, alert bankers sensed that the standards for oil-and-gas lending could use some modification. Radical changes in the system were not called for, but, as oil prices evolved, bankers, to be competitive, had to permit lending standards to evolve as well. Simultaneously, other new banking strategies were evolving, including one that called for a colossal quantity of money to be shipped abroad. By the end of 1982, the Chase Manhattan Bank had lent one billion seven hundred million dollars to Mexico, almost two and a half billion to Brazil, a billion to Venezuela, another billion to Argentina, Yugoslavia, and Chile combined. Those loans represented two hundred and twenty per cent of Chase's equity. Chase was hardly alone. The ten largest banks in the United States had risked more than one and a half times the value of their equity in loans to less developed countries; if two-thirds of the loans became losses, all the banks would break. Familiar headlines seemed interchangeable: "POLAND, BANKS TO RESUME TALKS ON DEBT ACCORD," "VOLCKER MEETS WITH CREDITORS ON BRAZIL DEBT," "ARGENTINA NEARS SHOWDOWN WITH BANKERS," "PERU REFINANCING PACT SIGNED," "BANKERS TO MEET ON MANAGEMENT OF MOROCCO DEBT." Whether or not the leaders of Poland, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Morocco, and many other countries regarded those debts seriously, the bankers certainly did. Several years before the problem of foreign loans became dinner-table conversation, bankers knew that they had overcommitted themselves.

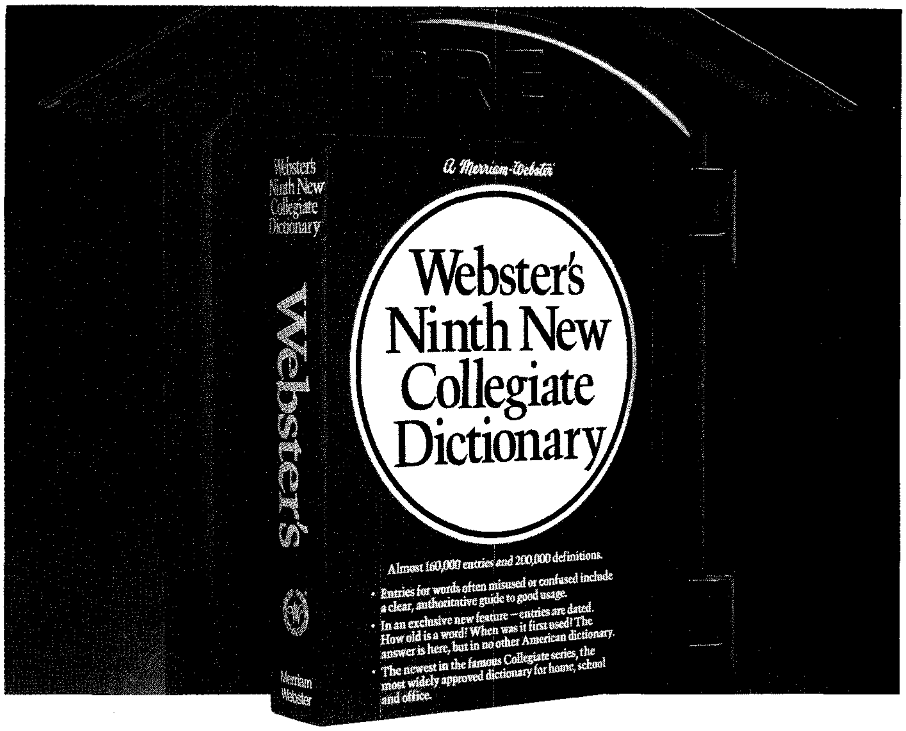
But the banks, because they were overloaded with deposits, had to lend the money to *someone*. Where did the deposits come from? From the very people who had jacked up the price of oil. You could think of it as a vicious circle or as a grotesque global joke. The money that the biggest banks lent to developing countries was the money that the world was paying to the OPEC countries. With the exception of a few borrowers, such as Mexico and Venezuela, that happened to be oil producers, the borrowers needed the loans to cover deficits that existed because they were spending so much to import oil. The excessive bank deposits were the fabled "petrodollars," and bankers knew that they had to keep them in motion—they had to keep pushing the stuff out the door. By the early eighties, when it began to dawn upon the banks that they had overlent to developing countries, they were well aware that other markets were no longer as available as they had once been. Large corporations that had once depended heavily on banks for financing had begun during the late seventies to raise operating funds by issuing their own commercial paper. In frustration, the bankers watched as their best customers learned self-sufficiency. The pressure on the banks was made greater by the need to recover losses they had suffered as a result of the recession of the mid-seventies—a recession that could be attributed, in part, to the cost of energy. American bankers' problems worsened when they were forced to compete with European banks, which were relatively free of regulation and were now pursuing the traditional customers of the American banks. After these foreign lenders found borrowers at the Fortune 500 level, they explored the next level down. The competition for new business continued until some big American banks were forced to discover the independent oil-and-gas business. Here were thousands of companies that had an appetite for investment capital but lacked the heft and the credit rating to sell a debt issue or commercial paper to the general public. Oklahoma was just another underdeveloped country. The independent oil-and-gas business was said to be "interest-rate inelastic." Whatever the freight might cost, the oilies would pay it, because as long as energy prices kept rising who could lose?

So the "energy crisis," with its mixed consequences, offered at least one complex element of an incipient coincidence. Here's another:

Just as OPEC was becoming the scourge of America, as the pool of petrodollars deepened, the management of the Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Company, of Chicago, decided that becoming America's supreme commercial and industrial lender was a worthwhile idea. Roger Anderson, a career employee who had been named chairman of Continental Illinois in 1973, announced in 1976 his wish that within five years the bank would lend enough money to rank it in the uppermost tier, along with Citibank and the Bank of America. Anderson's bank was, as they say in the boardroom, nicely positioned to pursue this ambition. Continental Illinois enjoyed a reputation as one of the most efficiently managed, prudent, and secure banks in the world. The archetypal Continental banker was a Midwestern Catholic who rode the commuter train home each night to one of the leafy northern or western Chicago suburbs—wonderful places to raise families. The bank was a sound, trustworthy institution that reasonably rewarded diligent labor.

In 1976, Continental was the eighth-largest bank holding company in the country, with more than twenty billion dollars in assets. Although it was hardly starting from scratch, aggressiveness would be needed to carry out the chairman's plan. Aggressive commercial lending had not always been the Continental Illinois style. Walter Cummings, who ran the bank for a quarter of a century, from the Depression through the fifties, believed that the only good loan was one that had been repaid. During his rule, a high proportion of Continental's funds was invested in government bonds. Growth then held a lower priority than sober hegemony. The Roger Anderson manifesto seemed at once tantalizing and puzzling: It was plausible, but what would it prove and what would it cost?

Continental Illinois's headquarters occupies a square block at the base of LaSalle Street, in the Loop, opposite the Federal Reserve Bank branch and catercorner to the Chicago Board of Trade. Immense fluted Ionic pillars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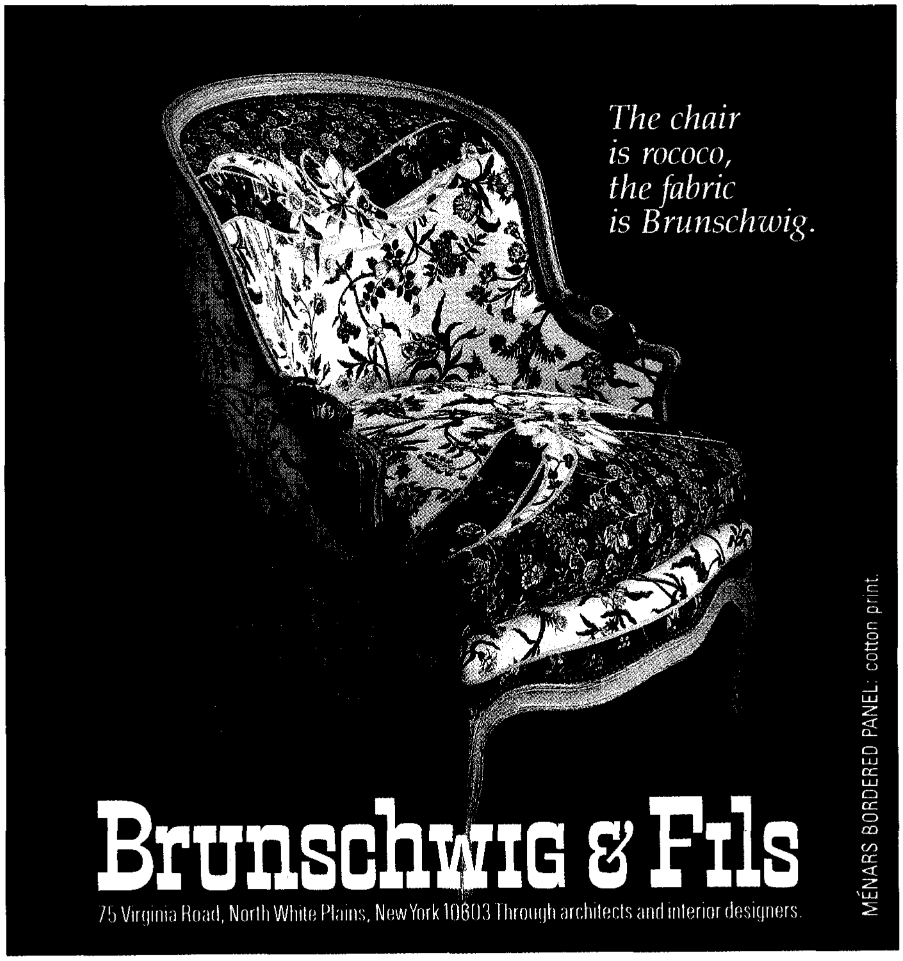
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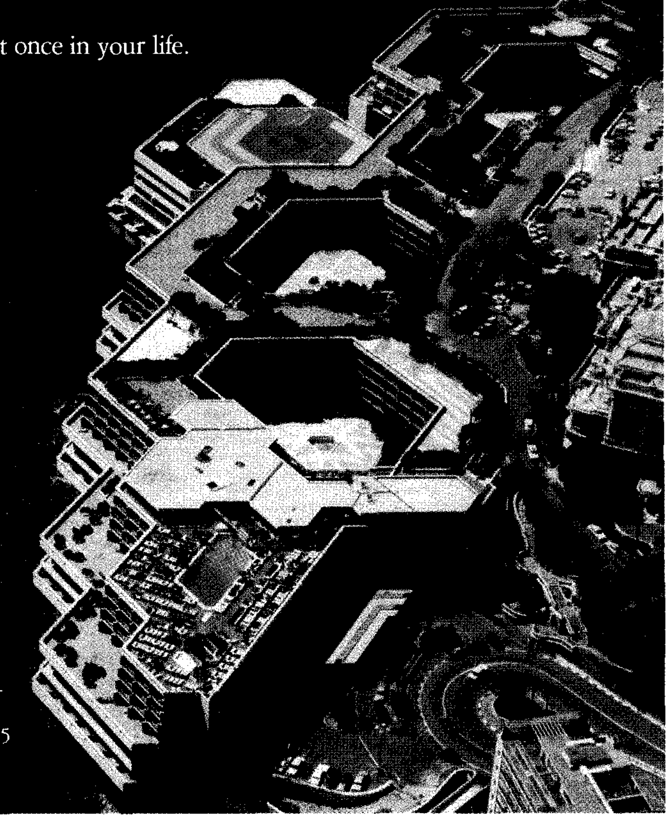
flank the entrance to the main building, a twenty-three-story granite-and-limestone structure that went up in 1924. Next door, accessible by an aerial walkway, is the Rookery Building, a much older, weathered, soot-covered structure, where certain of Continental's retail banking functions are performed. One of the Rookery Building's architects, Daniel Burnham, once uttered this credo: "Make big plans . . . A noble logical diagram once recorded will never die." The banking floor inside the main building is among the grandest in the world. It contains dozens more immense pillars, of Italian marble. The ceiling, fifty feet high, has an apron of brightly illuminated frescoes offset by apothegms dedicated to the theme of international commerce. Between 1977 and 1981, when Continental's assets were, according to plan, swelling—from twenty-three billion dollars to forty-five billion—a consensus existed among bankers to the effect that whatever Continental Illinois does, it won't be messy and it will probably make money. In the Midwest, Continental's preëminence was a given. If Continental is involved, other bankers could assure themselves, it must be right.

Of the thirteen thousand people who worked for the bank, some twelve hundred had lending authority. Continental Illinois lent money to International Harvester and Standard Oil of Indiana, and it lent to Sears, Roebuck and Company, Marshall Field & Company, and the Quaker Oats Company. The bureaucracy of lending divided potential customers among six major departments, each of which was organized into smaller domains—groups, divisions, sections, teams, and so forth. An oil-and-gas-account officer assigned to Oklahoma would, in theory, report to a vice-president in the mid-continent energy-lending section, who would himself answer to a senior vice-president in the oil-and-gas-and-mining group, which was part of the special-industries department, the executive vice-president in charge of which reported to the executive vice-president in charge of all commercial lending, who, presumably, had direct access to the president and the chairman of the board. And vice versa. The employees of Continental Illinois understood that the bold new strategy—"Book loans, sell money"—flowed explicitly from the top.

Distinction as an energy lender was something that Continental had enjoyed since the mid-nineteen-fifties,



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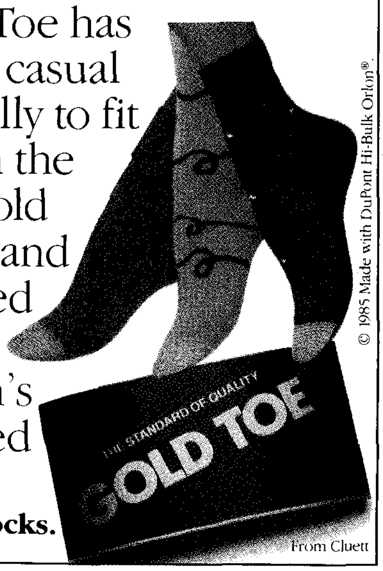

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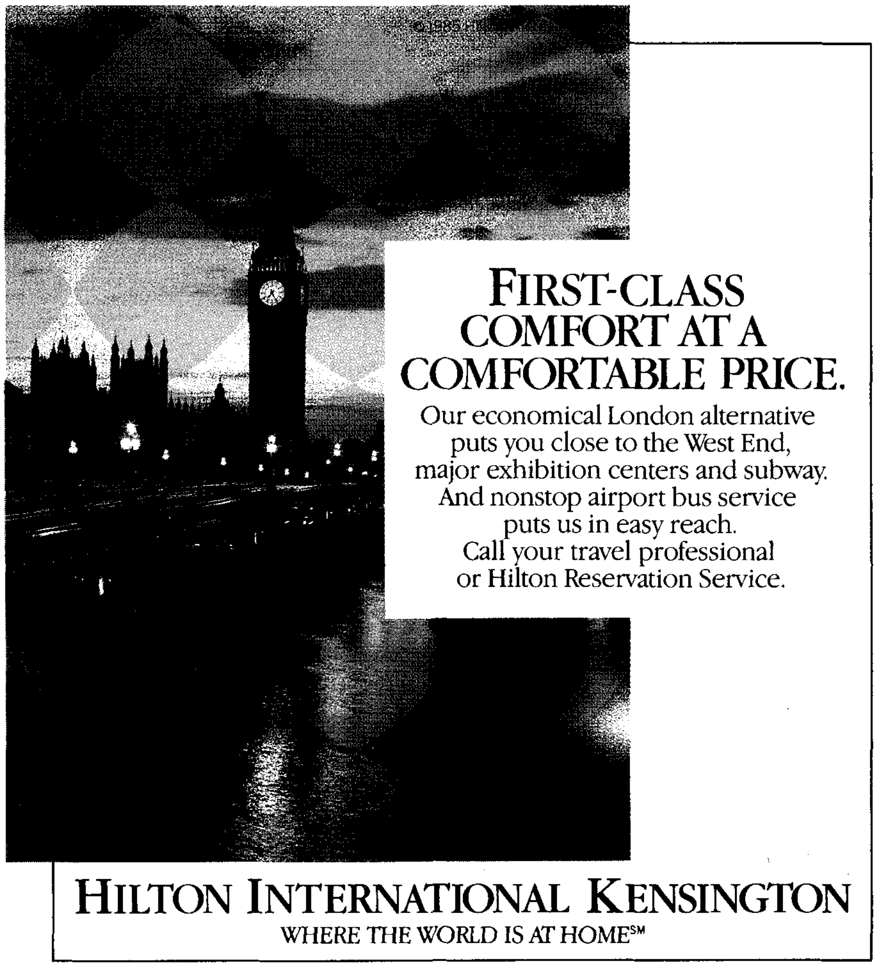
when it had begun to emerge as *the* coal banker in America. An effort to lend to the independent oil-and-gas industry got under way at that time, but it was conducted mainly by long distance, which meant that to be bankable you had to be more or less visible from Chicago. The operator who needed a few hundred thousand dollars to participate in some shallow gas wells in southwest Louisiana did not fit the borrower profile that Continental then had in mind. In 1975, the bank opened a loan-production office in Houston, and four years later it opened another one in Denver. The Continental Illinois money salesman who was assigned to Oklahoma at that time was expected to call on Phillips Petroleum, Cities Service, Kerr-McGee—giant Oklahoma-based oil companies—and to look for independents to whom he might be able to lend a million dollars or more. Everything west of the Mississippi except Texas, Colorado, and California belonged to this single loan officer's territory. Only Oklahoma showed growth potential, but even that seemed uncertain. As late as the spring of 1980, only three Continental Illinois representatives travelled regularly to Oklahoma looking for assets.

Two years later, Continental Illinois had on its books more than a billion dollars' worth of loans that had originated at Penn Square. Something had happened. In a world governed by tidy conspiracies, it might appear that Bill P. Jennings, skillfully preying upon the institutional cupidity of Continental Illinois, had suckered Chicago's biggest bank into a neatly plotted trap; the chairman of the House Banking Committee said as much at hearings held late in the summer of 1982, when Congress launched a brief crusade to find out precisely what had happened at Penn Square. "These fellows conned . . . Continental Illinois," the chairman said. "They conned the best." The flaw in this analysis was that the world is not tidy. Penn Square Bank was not a neatly plotted phenomenon. Something else had happened.

THERE was a point in the life of the Penn Square Bank at which it became, in effect, two banks: the little shopping-center bank and the ambitious oil-and-gas merchant bank that Jennings grafted onto it—a Formula One racing engine on a roller skate. The bank that Jennings bought in 1975 had thirty-five employees and assets of thirty-five million dollars, in-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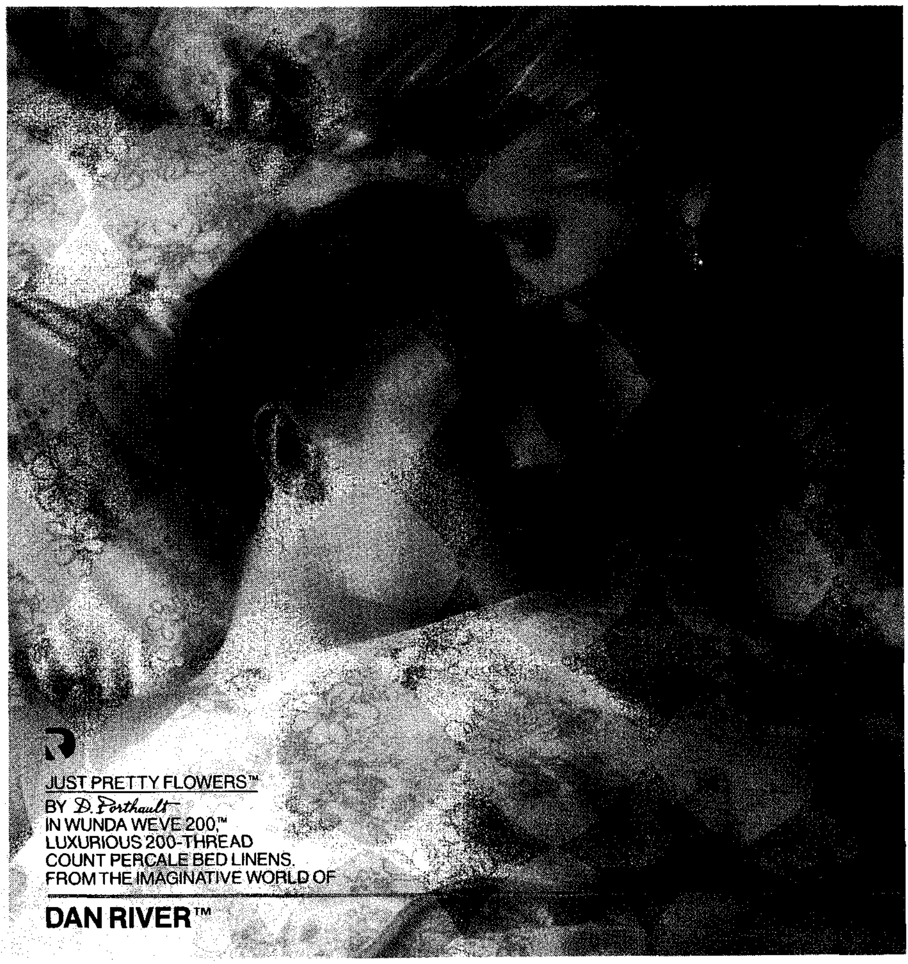
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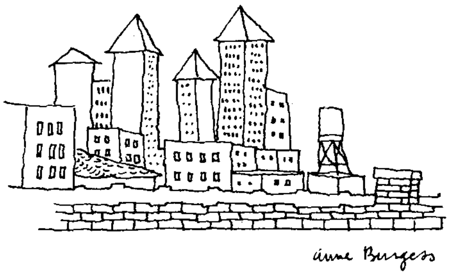
cluding a loan portfolio valued at less than twenty million dollars. It had taken fifteen years to get that far, and during the last ten the bank's president had been Frank Murphy. Penn Square was then a modest, sensible, cordial bank, and Frank Murphy was a modest, sensible, cordial banker. He was a slender man with light-blue eyes, gray hair that he brushed straight back, a small mouth, a prominent forehead, and a cast of self-willed invisibility. He had arrived at Penn Square as an assistant vice-president four years before becoming the president. Most of his training had taken place with a commercial credit company, where he made loans on business equipment and consumer products. Asked to describe his style of banking, he would say, "Very conservative." He was an installment lender at heart, and a dedicated Kiwanian. He liked to fish and play golf.

Jennings took the view that he wanted things done "right," but above all he wanted the loan *made*, the deal *done*. Murphy's approach had been, in effect, "Here are ten reasons that you can't have the money. Now let's see whether you can overcome them. Get the documents in order. Bring me the collateral. Then we'll consider a loan." Penn Square's profits, as well as its rate of loan delinquency, were directly proportional to Frank Murphy's ambition. Among Oklahoma City banks, it ranked seventeenth in total deposits; statewide, it ranked thirty-ninth. Once Jennings had moved in, Murphy's ambition was to hold his ground for seven years, until he turned sixty-two, and then retire. "With my pension, my dividends, and some consulting work, I'd be in good shape for a country boy from Chelsea, Oklahoma," he said.

New employees were recruited—a stream of fresh arrivals which grew along with the bank. One of the recruits was William George Patterson. The most concise theory of Bill Patterson that I ever heard came from a woman who did not really know him but had attended the University of Oklahoma while he was there. She said, "I never met a Sigma Chi who wasn't crazy." I gathered that that was supposed to explain the end of the oil boom and the deep-gas mania in the same way that Archduke Franz Ferdinand's rotten luck was supposed to explain several hundred million other people's rotten luck. Originally, Patterson intended to become a physician, and he often wore hospital greens around the fraternity house. One of the Sigma Chis had a slow-healing surgical wound that required a fresh dressing every day for months, and Patterson volunteered for the job. He enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps, risking a long visit to Vietnam, because he thought a kind word from the Pentagon would help him stop at medical school along the way. If Patterson had managed better than a two-point-five grade average—and if the war in Southeast Asia had not ended, so that the Army became less eager for doctors—he might have had a chance to fulfill his goal. Late in the game, he considered studying Spanish and applying to the medical school at the University of Guadalajara. By that time, however, overlooked details had caught up with him.

Patterson had blue eyes, brown hair, a fleshy face, a round-tipped straight nose, a lopsided grin, and large front teeth. His dimensions were size 40 regular. Dressed up, he looked all right. He looked as if he could be expected to go to the office in the morning and make it home for dinner that night. Well into college, he often wore his high-school letterman's jacket—he had been a decent varsity wrestler. Patterson worked hard at getting people to laugh at him, and if someone else in the room knew how to be funny he was a good audience. Someone told me that Patterson once let in some fresh air by throwing a lamp through a window, but another Sigma Chi swore that it couldn't have happened. "Hanging nude from the lightpost, yeah, that's like Monkeybrains"—the nickname an upperclassman had bestowed on the freshman Patterson. "But throwing a lamp—no, no. Bill wasn't destructive."

Patterson's first job in banking did not require him to make any credit decisions. He was a janitor. This was one of several part-time jobs that he held while still in college. After graduation, in 1973, he went to work for the First National Bank & Trust Company of Oklahoma City as a management trainee. His annual salary was in the mid-teens. Comfortable survival was possible, because during his senior year in college he had married Eve Edwards, the only daughter of one of the wealthiest families in the Texas panhandle. Bartlesville, Oklahoma, where Patterson had grown up—the home of Phillips Petroleum, and a company town if one has ever existed—had a population of thirty thousand, three Republicans for every two Democrats, and one of the highest per-capita incomes in the nation. It also had a rigidly stratified social system that no one complained about loudly. Bill Patterson's father, Pat, was a museum curator and an artist. He had enough Apache blood to sign his Indian name, Kemoha, to his oil and watercolor landscapes. Around Bartlesville, Pat (Kemoha) Patterson was as close to bohemian as you could get. Marrying Eve Edwards exposed Bill Patterson for the first time to people who meant business when they talked about estate planning. Eve's father, Gene, had grown up in Oklahoma City and had attended law school at the University of Oklahoma but had spent his working life in Amarillo. He was the chairman and chief executive officer of the First National Bank of Amarillo. Gene Edwards' father-in-law, Edward Johnson, had built a fortune in oil and cattle and real estate. Even by Texas standards, these were wealthy people. Two brothers of Eve's had attended O.U., and they knew Bill Patterson. When Eve and Bill announced that they were getting married, the family's joy was restrained. Eve was intelligent, even-tempered, and uncommonly well mannered. The closest she ever came to rebelliousness was when she married Bill Patterson.



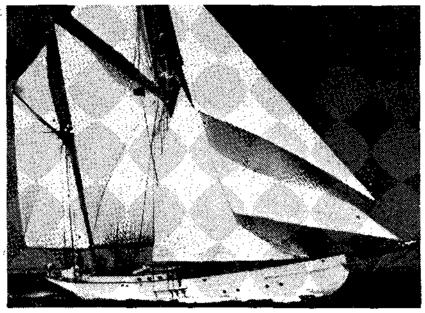
One day not long after Patterson began working at the First National Bank, he went to lunch with an old friend.

The friend asked him how he had spent his morning. "Counting quarters," Patterson said.

The friend said, "No, seriously."

Patterson said, "*Counting quarters*. Counting them, putting them in paper rolls, folding the ends of the rolls."

The Sigma Chis would bump into Patterson downtown and say "Hi, Monkey," and he would smile and say something funny. He toiled in the metropolitan-accounts department. There were non-borrowing First National customers who had savings accounts with robust balances. For a time, Patterson's job was to call upon these depositors and try to sell them



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other banking services. If a customer said yes, he might like to borrow money, Patterson would refer the account to someone in the loan department. Patterson stayed at the bank three and a half years—long enough to persuade his superiors that he was not "loan-officer material." The president of the First National Bank & Trust Company—unable to sense Patterson's special skills and gifts—had unambivalent feelings. Years after Patterson had departed, he said, "There was no way we were going to let Bill Patterson lend a dime of the bank's money."

As a favor to Patterson's father-in-law, who was a friend of long standing, Jennings asked Frank Murphy late in 1977 to talk to Patterson. "I thought he seemed like an intelligent young man," Murphy said later. "I hired him and put him to work in the credit department."

Before Patterson could lend a dime—or, for that matter, several hundred million dollars—of Penn Square's and other banks' funds, there would be a necessary apprenticeship. In Patterson's view, working with Frank Murphy and reviewing loan documents and learning the paperwork side of credit transactions only slightly surpassed counting quarters. Within six months, Jennings instructed Murphy that he himself, and he alone, would supervise and train Patterson. Jennings said later that Patterson was "willing to work harder than any young man I've ever met, and he developed what I interpreted as a tremendous grasp of oil-and-gas economics with a limited background." Patterson had been at Penn Square only about a year and a half when Jennings put him in charge of oil-and-gas lending. Within a few more months, Jennings was telling him that he looked forward to the day when Patterson would preside over the bank. And there came a day when Patterson was telling friends that *he* was looking forward to the day when he would buy out Jennings.

When Patterson began to manage the oil-and-gas division, in the middle of 1979, Penn Square's officer corps was still small—fewer than twenty. The bank was growing, but not in a manner that seemed unmanageable. A barrel of oil cost twenty-two dollars. The price had risen steadily, but the "second price shock"—a single leap of eight dollars, which was a consequence of the fall of the Shah of Iran—still lay a few months ahead. With encouragement from Jennings, Patterson proceeded conscientiously. He had wanted to become a lender, and now that he had a chance he seemed eager to do it properly. Even the skeptics at the Penn Square Bank paused and scratched their heads. There were oilies who could not be bombed out of the downtown banks, it was said, and Patterson, at Jennings' bidding, was prepared to romance them. If landing an oil-and-gas customer meant offering a home mortgage at well-below-market rates, no problem. If it meant offering a ten-year term on a loan that another bank would expect to be repaid in seven or five years, that could be arranged as well.

The ascension of Patterson made it evident that Murphy had outlived his usefulness. Although Murphy had hired Patterson, it took him only a few months to develop an antipathy toward the young man. "Did I think Patterson was funny? Hell, no," Murphy has said. "I take attending meetings and being prompt seriously. I think appearances matter. I don't care who you are. I disapproved of his lateness, his insubordination."

One morning, Patterson arrived at a loan-committee meeting late but still in time to present a six-figure proposal. In Murphy's estimation, there were no grounds for making a loan, no documents upon which to base a judgment. To Murphy, a credit of, say, three hundred thousand dollars that went sour would be like thirty bad loans on midsize family automobiles.

Patterson listened to Murphy's objections and said, "Your old-style way of banking is a thing of the past."

Murphy told Patterson, "As long as you're making loans here, you're going to do them the way I think they should be done."

Murphy was wrong on that point. That was the day that Penn Square, in a practical sense, divided into two banks under one roof. Because Murphy wanted to hang around long enough to collect his retirement benefits, he did not resign. Because it was in Jennings' nature to massage as many constituents as possible, he did not invite Murphy to leave. Jennings' taste was nothing if not eclectic. He believed in Bobby Hefner's cosmic vision. He looked at Jerry Dale Allen and saw great potential. When it came to Carl Swan, there was nothing he would not do. And Bill Patterson, it seemed, he loved.

WHEN the traditional oil-and-gas-lending standards were being formulated, decades ago, Bill Patterson was not yet born. It is possible, therefore, that he never did grasp the vital distinctions between the old rules and the new ones. Perhaps, during his career, he stayed too busy having fun to pay attention to vital distinctions. Any banker will acknowledge that money lent at twenty-two per cent fits the definition of "fun." From a bank customer's point of view, fun is a loan that on its surface appears to cost twenty-two per cent per annum but in a practical sense costs nothing. Jennings, who had a generous and warm feeling toward the Continental Illinois National Bank & Trust Company, often remarked that he had learned a great deal about oil-and-gas lending by observing that institution. "Penn Square, to the extent that it was able to do so, adopted the mineral-lending philosophy of Continental Illinois," Jennings said. "If Continental escalated oil prices, we escalated oil. If they held the price level, *we* held it level." Continental, after all, had invented the evergreen revolver—the free-money loan.

His hat in his hand (and his merchant-banking concept between his ears), Jennings wooed Continental Illinois and other potential upstream banks. Besides Chicago, he tested markets in Houston, Dallas, New York, New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Jennings' earliest encounter with Continental Illinois was not encouraging. An Oklahoma City oilman whose company had run into obstacles while trying to arrange a line of credit at Continental sought Jennings' help. This was in the autumn of 1977. The loan officer who at that time covered Oklahoma for Continental Illinois was Dennis Winget. Jennings called Winget and offered to assume part of the loan. Because Penn Square had done nothing to originate the loan request, Winget responded with an unfriendly counterproposal. "How about if you tell me where *you* come into this deal?" Winget said. In the end, Jennings escorted his oilman friend to Dallas, and the company borrowed from a bank there.

A few months later, the tables were turned. In Tulsa, Winget made one of his periodic calls on the Utica National Bank. Continental had always had a solid foothold in Tulsa, where

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the average oil company was older than in Oklahoma City, and so was the money. An out-of-town banker just had to devote some time to the challenge. The chief lending officer at Utica National had attended high school and college with Bill Patterson. When Winget said that he was interested in buying overlines, the young banker said, "You ought to get acquainted with Bill Patterson, down at Penn Square, in Oklahoma City. They're going to be aggressive." Following this lead, Continental Illinois within the next few months bought from Penn Square three loan participations—a one-million-dollar credit to a small refinery, and two production loans for roughly a million and a half each. One of the production loans went to a colorfully egotistical oilman who had become annoyed with a downtown Oklahoma City bank, and the other went to Carl Swan. Although Swan was not short of cash, having recently collected ten million dollars from the sale of Basin Petroleum, he recognized the economic wisdom of leverage and the evergreen revolver.

Each of these deals was, according to Winget's recollection, "done to perfection." Petroleum-engineering reports were scrutinized well in advance of the loan closings. Financial statements were current. Mortgages were duly filed with county clerks. The borrowing was secured. This was still the early phase of an uncertain courtship. The relationship between a bank the size of Continental Illinois and its smaller correspondent banks is delicate and tricky. The larger bank can steal the smaller bank's business just as easily as it can extend assistance. Even Jennings, a man equipped with a loan-merchandising concept, was wary of that possibility. When Swan went to Chicago to be wined and dined by Continental Illinois, Jennings tagged along, like a watchful father chauffeuring his son on a first date.

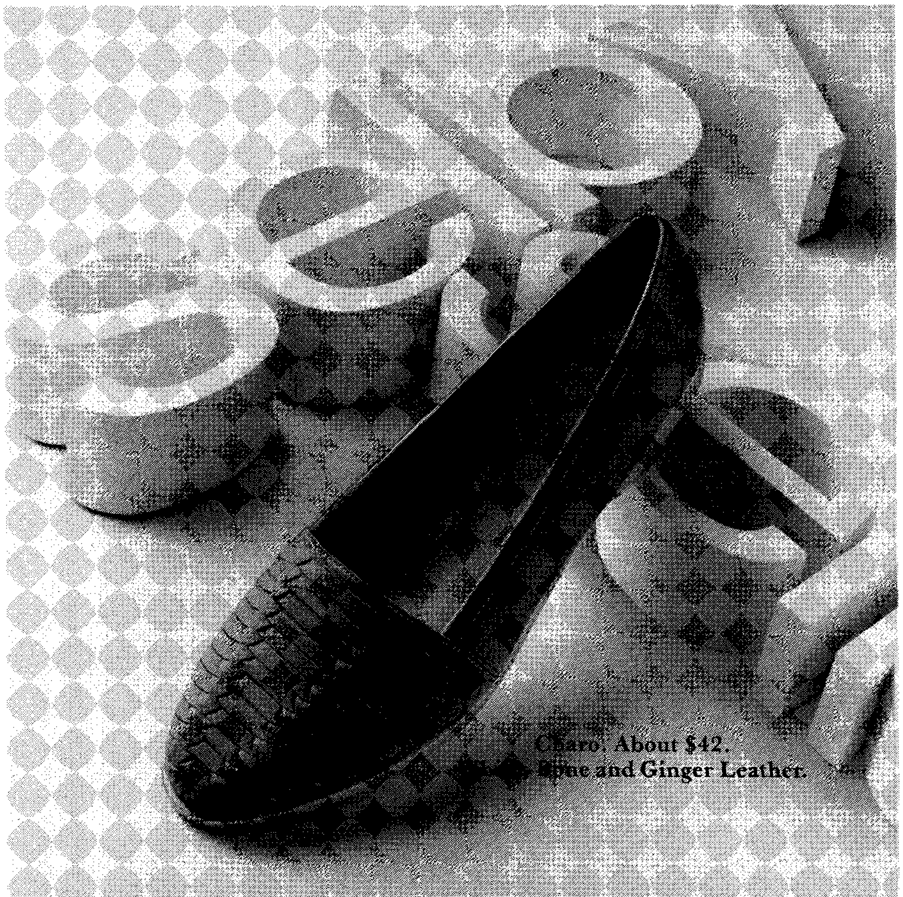
Continental had an admirable policy of shooing its young banking associates out into the field quickly, giving them considerable responsibility at a tender age. Opportunities abounded—opportunities for individual bank officers as well as for the institution as a whole. Movement up through the ranks would come to those who returned to Chicago bearing quality assets. Winget had the services of a series of fresh graduates from the bank's credit-training program. Like an encyclopedia salesman, the graduate would make cold calls upon prospects: walk into an office, introduce himself as a representative of the Continental Illinois Bank, and explain that Chicago had come to Oklahoma to lend money to the right people. Sometimes the rookie got invited out to the country club for Martinis and lunch, and sometimes the brusque response was "I'm too busy to talk to anyone now. I'm on my way out to a rig."

Continental's representatives in Oklahoma noticed, perhaps a year and a half into the Penn Square era, a shift in the ground rules. No longer could a banker approach a prospect with the attitude "Look, chances are you're not really worthy of credit, but let's talk anyway." Now the oilies were saying, "What can you do for *me*? I have a *right* to borrow." Cold calling was becoming a harder sell. This is where Jennings and Patterson came in handy. Because they knew so many people who could use some money, they eliminated the need for the hard sell. Beating the bushes for new business began to seem inefficient. Why bother with that routine when you had Patterson doing your legwork? The word went out that Penn Square was becoming Continental Illinois's Oklahoma loan-production office.

During the first four years that Jennings controlled Penn Square, the bank's loan portfolio nearly quintupled. At the end of 1979, it stood at ninety-two million dollars. During that period, the volume of loan participations sold to out-of-town banks went from a negligible figure to seventy-seven million dollars. More than half the participations were bought by Continental Illinois. Two other significant banks, meanwhile, had become upstream lenders—the Northern Trust Company, of Chicago, and Seattle–First National Bank. The Northern Trust link grew, in part, out of the old Sigma Chi tie; one of Northern's petroleum engineers had been a fraternity brother of Patterson's. Seattle-First—usually referred to as Seafirst—entered the Penn Square orbit when Patterson put in a call to it with a question about a customer who did business with both banks. By late 1979, Seafirst's loan purchases totalled only four million dollars. Northern, which had more energy-lending experience, had picked up almost thirty million dollars in business. Both banks saw in the close friendship between Continental Illinois and Penn Square proof that the Oklahoma oilpatch was a good place to put money to work. Continental Illinois was an imposing competitor, but it was, above all, a legitimizer. The waiting area outside Patterson's office was becoming cluttered with importuning bankers, all of whom regarded Continental Illinois with envy and respect.

The freedom that Continental's lenders enjoyed in the field had to be balanced with accountability to the home office. Even when a Dennis Winget found a loan that he was eager to make, he could not do it alone. Winget had the authority to commit to lend a million dollars, but the approval of a second lending officer was required to put a loan on the books. Winget reported to Alvin J. (Jerry) Pearson, the head of Continental Illinois's oil-and-gas-lending division, and Pearson was exacting. Roughly fifty people—from administrative assistants to loan officers—worked in Jerry Pearson's division, and that number included three petroleum engineers. Pearson, a petroleum engineer and a banker both, with thirty years of combined experience, had a sterling reputation. Officially, the limit of his lending authority was five million dollars. In practice, however, it was ten million dollars, because the officer above Pearson almost never vetoed his decisions. Former Continental Illinois employees, waxing nostalgic, now describe the Pearson era as "the glory days."

Pearson left Continental in the late summer of 1980 to go to work for one of his customers, Nucorp Energy. The initial Continental loan to Nucorp—which in 1982 went into bankruptcy, owing the bank a hundred and seventy-three million dollars—was booked in 1979. The loan officer on the account at that time was a vice-president named John Lytle. Lytle was a "section head" in charge of "independent oil-and-gas lending worldwide." When he moved into that job, in 1977, he had inherited a four-hundred-million-dollar loan portfolio. After Pearson left, the organization chart at Continental took on a different look, and Lytle ruled a new bailiwick, called "the mid-continent-oil-and-gas division"—meaning America east of Denver except Texas. As a result of the across-the-board growth in loan volume at Continental, Lytle, despite having lost much geographical terri-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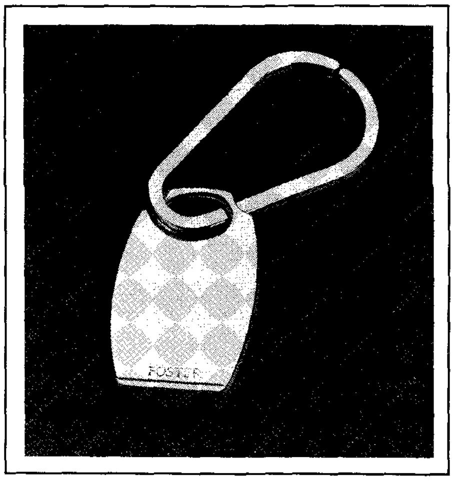
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tory, emerged with responsibility for eight hundred million dollars' worth of credits.

Lytle had lived all his life in Chicago, had graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in economics and finance, and had given the United States Navy two years and Continental Illinois the rest. The son of a banker who had worked forty years for one institution—the Harris Trust & Savings Bank, of Chicago—Lytle had been at Continental Illinois eighteen years when he began to learn oil-and-gas lending. That year, 1977, he earned a salary of forty thousand dollars and a profit-sharing bonus of about four thousand dollars. With his wife and three children (a fourth came along later), he lived in a house in Northfield, a thirty-minute train ride from the Loop. The house had cost him sixty thousand dollars in 1967; some years later, he spent forty-five thousand dollars for property that brought the size of his plot to slightly less than two acres. Lytle was not hard to like. He had no abrasive edges, no starchiness. He was conventionally handsome, mid-forties graying, with dark eyebrows and a vaguely wistful presence. Meeting Lytle in a bar, you could easily engage him in relaxed, enlightened conversation. While he was not compulsive about work, he could, under pressure, function as if he were. He grasped that he was better at marketing bank products than he was at running a bank. He could evaluate his own strengths and shortcomings. "In terms of temperament, I'm a sales manager, not a general manager," he said. "I rate myself a hundred on new business, a ninety on credit. I was tremendous with customers, I made friends all over. I was a real oilie—with only three or four years' experience, but I don't think that showed. The home office—I didn't have that much interest in it."

The self-aware organization man whom Lytle described turned out to be just the sort of banker with whom Jennings and Patterson enjoyed doing business. With Lytle they could communicate easily—often virtually by code. Upon becoming head of the mid-continent-oil-and-gas division, Lytle at last qualified for Continental Illinois's special incentive bonuses for upper middle managers. The limit of his lending authority had doubled, from two and a half million dollars to five million. Subsequently, it would double again. During 1980, Penn Square's size doubled, and the volume of loan participations quintupled. Continental now owned two hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of Penn Square-originated loans—approximately two-thirds of all the loans sold by the smaller bank. Continental Illinois was programmed for growth, Lytle wanted to grow, and Penn Square meshed neatly with those corporate and personal ambitions. Everywhere, the push was on. It was one of those coincidences. Lytle pushed.

CORPORATE citizens learn the advantages of maintaining a distance from bright new ideas; new ideas usually cost money. When the need for heavy thinking arises, the politic manager subcontracts the job. In 1976, the Chase Manhattan Bank asked McKinsey & Company, the management consultants, how Chase's correspondent-banking division could make more money. Traditional correspondent banking has roughly as much appeal as trusts-and-estates work in a large law firm. I have heard it described as "basic blocking and tackling"—selling non-loan services such as cash letters, coupon collection, foreign collection, security safekeeping, and international remittances and transfers. Competition is high, and profit margins tend to be low. McKinsey & Company produced a document titled "Chase Institutional Banking Strategy." It came to two hundred pages, of which ten discussed the wisdom, tactics, and mechanics of loan-participation purchases. Until McKinsey suggested making an effort to buy loan participations, Chase had provided this service only for its very closest correspondent banks. McKinsey's advice was that Chase should become more bold, but within necessary limits. Chase should buy no overlines greater than five million dollars, and no more than ten million in total purchases from any single bank. And Chase should restrict its dealings to well-established banks with historically low rates of loan losses. Correspondent banking was part of the domestic-institutional-banking department, which in Chase Manhattan's scheme of operations was far away from corporate lending and energy lending. Nowhere in the report did McKinsey & Company mention energy lending.

In the fall of 1980, a Chase correspondent banker named Richard Pinney attended a banking convention in Chicago and saw an old friend, Mike Tighe, who worked for the Northern

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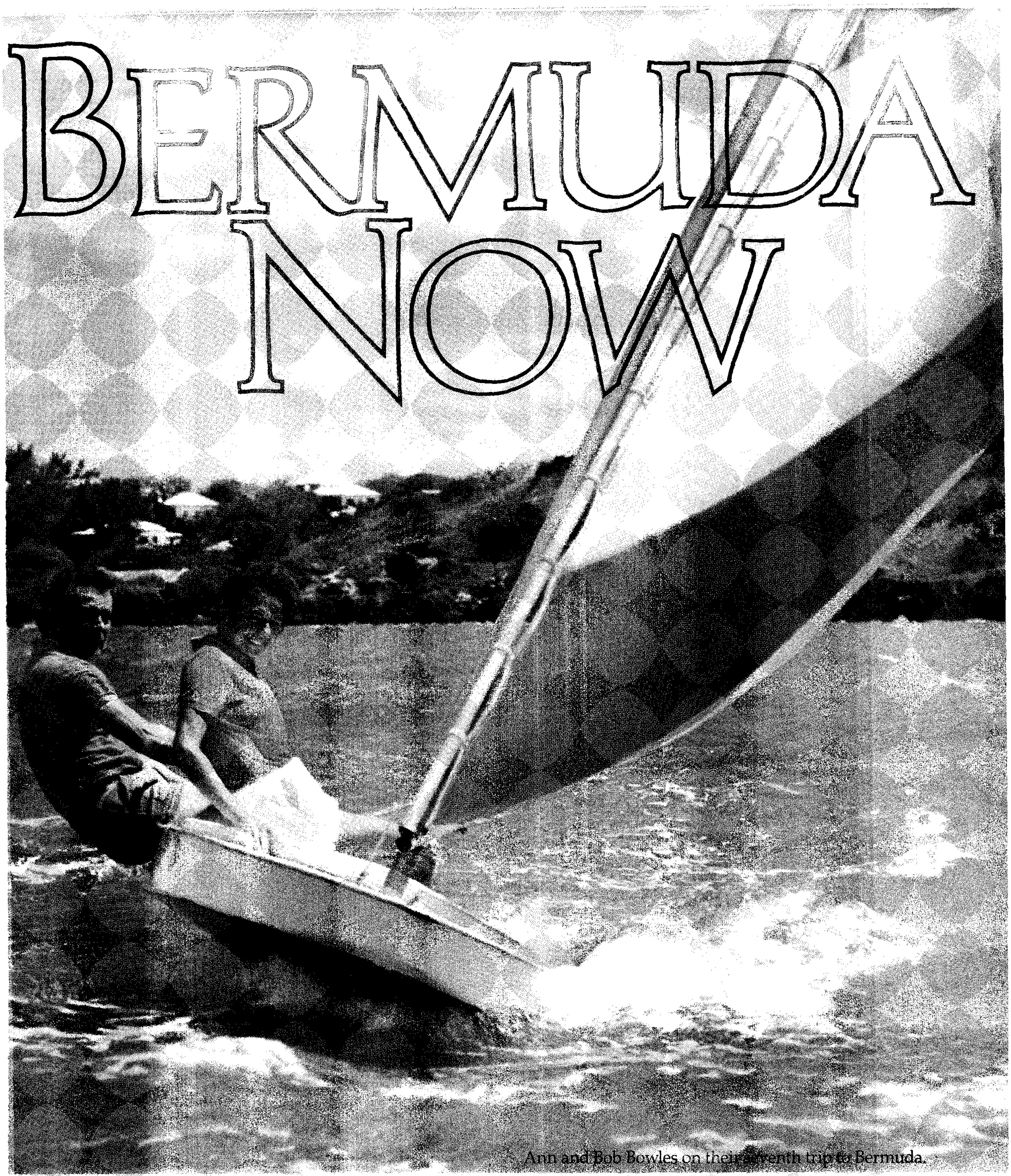

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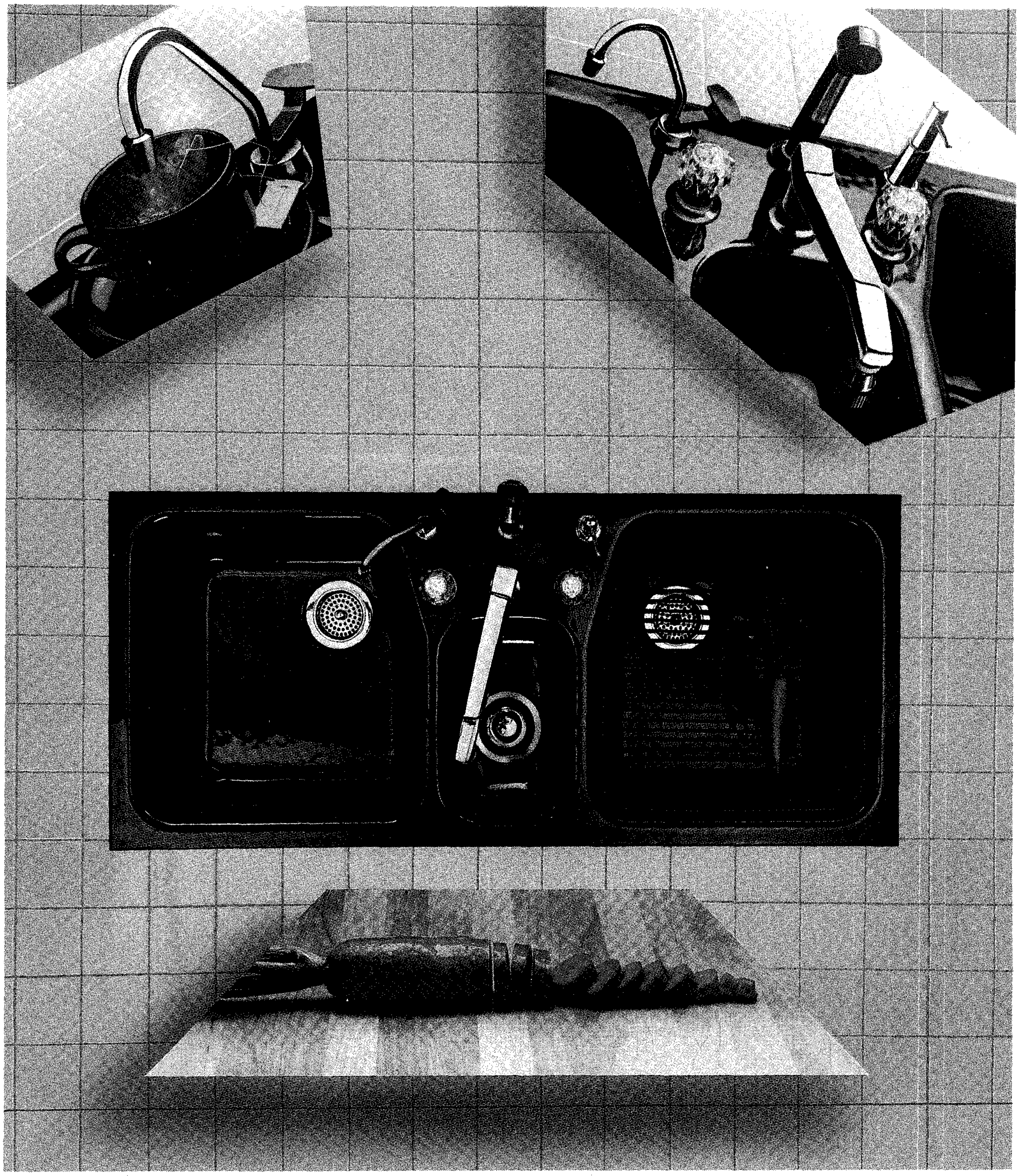

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Trust Company. At Chase, Pinney covered “the West,” which meant everything beyond the western shore of the Mississippi, plus Illinois and Wisconsin. Tighe, during most of his career, had been a corporate lender. He had also worked as a correspondent banker, and he had regularly encountered Pinney on the road. The two bankers had not crossed paths in almost two years, however, because during that time Tighe had been in charge of oil-and-gas lending at Northern Trust. Pinney respected Tighe, who was a matriculant in the work-hard, play-hard school. “I thought he was a hell of a guy,” Pinney said. “Everyone I knew thought he was smart, able, and one of the best producers Northern Trust ever had. He knew how to have fun, but at eight o’clock the next morning he was up and ready to work.”

The principals at Northern Trust liked to think of their bank as a Chicago version of the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company. While there is but one House of Morgan, Northern Trust could claim to be at least as conservative. Its assets were five billion six hundred million dollars, which made it the fourth-largest commercial bank in Chicago, thirty-first in the nation. When Northern’s strategic planners decided, in 1977, to pursue energy-loan business, they had consulted with some of Chase’s oil-and-gas-lending officers. In the Midwest, Northern was one of Chase Manhattan’s closest correspondent banks. Upon hearing that Pinney was eager to buy overlines, Tighe said, “You ought to call on Penn Square, in Oklahoma City. They have an uncanny ability to generate loans.”

Pinney knew—as Tighe knew; as the bankers from Continental Illinois and Seafirst knew; as, indeed, all the bank representatives who were then knocking on Bill Patterson’s door knew—that the real-estate business was in a slump, New England was suffering, the commercial-fishing and lumber industries of the Pacific Northwest were dying, the upper Midwest had already been scrubbed down by the embalmers, and there was not a soothsayer in the country who did not believe that an acute energy shortage would descend before the end of the century. “Sun Belt” was the term of the day. Chase Manhattan’s own economists predicted sixty-five-dollar-a-barrel oil not far down the road—a rather conservative prognostication, some would have said. Although Pinney did not board the next plane to Oklahoma City, this useful information mattered to him. What also mattered was his confidence in Tighe and Northern Trust.

That week in Chicago, Lytle had met with Paul Souder, who was the vice-chairman of the Michigan National Bank—the main subsidiary of a bank holding company with combined assets that made it comparable in size to Northern Trust. Souder had an interesting way of expressing how difficult it was to sell money at home. According to Lytle, he said, “The only thing we have in Michigan is unemployed blacks and empty automobile factories.” What Souder hopefully envisioned was an arrangement whereby Continental Illinois would share with Michigan National portions of its oil-and-gas loans. Logical reciprocity would be for Michigan National to offer to Continental some participations in loans that it had originated. Within a few weeks of this first conversation, Lytle and members of his staff held a number of meetings with bankers from Michigan National. By November, the Michigan bankers had met Patterson and had bought twelve million dollars’ worth of Penn Square loan participations. Several months later, the president of the flagship branch of the Michigan National Bank got in touch with a friend at Chase Manhattan to confirm that Penn Square was a credible, satisfactory source of loans. The Chase friend was Richard Pinney.

The first Chase Manhattan emissary to Penn Square arrived in February of 1981. The banker whom Pinney dispatched was Margaret Sipperly, a poised and outgoing woman in her mid-twenties. She had worked at Chase since 1976, had passed through Chase’s “credit development” program—the indoctrination that every lending trainee in the bank undergoes—and had been a correspondent banker for slightly more than three years. A few months earlier, she had been promoted from assistant treasurer to assistant vice-president. Her annual salary was in the mid-thirties. The first Penn Square officer she met was Frank Murphy, the lame-duck president. Not long into their conversation, Meg Sipperly realized that her credit training had taught her no specifics of oil-and-gas lending. When Murphy

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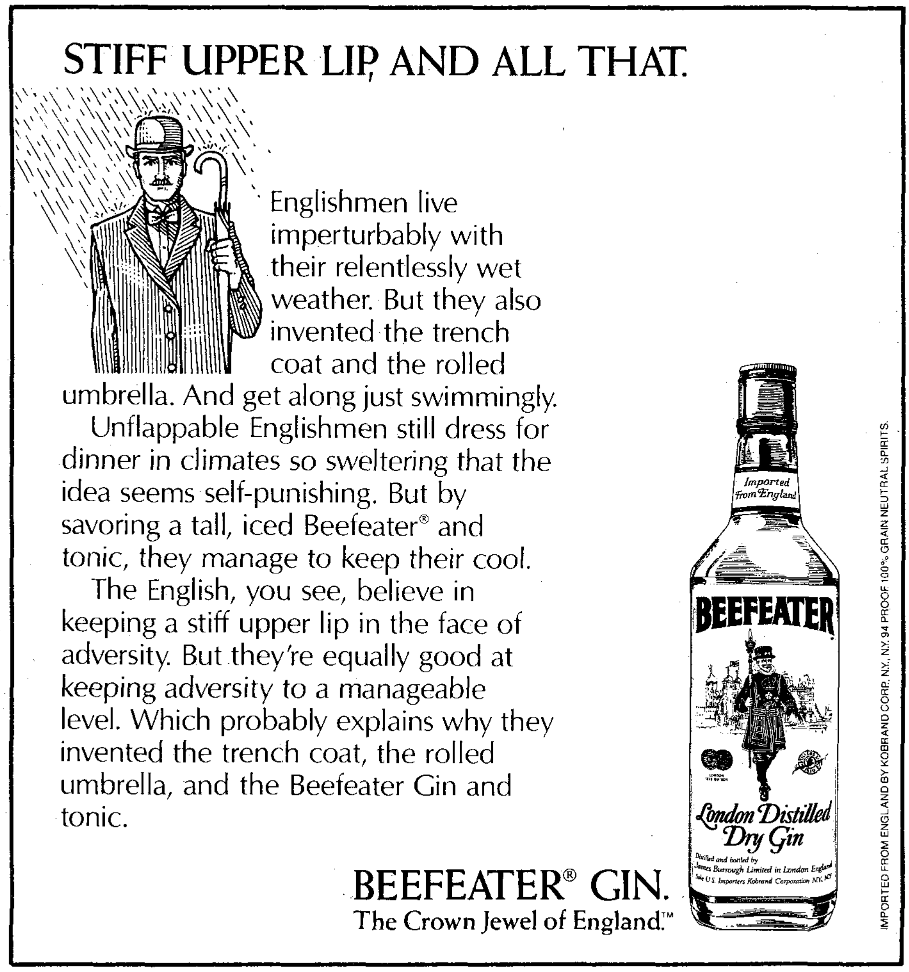
mentioned a customer with a "fishing operation" who needed a six-million-dollar loan, an unsettling feeling descended upon her. She tried to imagine which town in a state where the wind comes sweeping down the plain might be the home of an oyster breeder who needed six million dollars. Perhaps Murphy knew an extraordinarily ambitious catfish farmer. Before long, Sipperly figured out that fishing meant retrieving drilling equipment that had been inadvertently left in a well bore.

Within two days, Sipperly called at Penn Square three times, meeting Bill Patterson along the way. As a result, Chase bought six loan participations, totalling two and a half million dollars. Relatively speaking, this was not a great deal of business—not something that Chase's corporate lenders would have deigned to pursue. It was, nevertheless, an important beginning. Within a month, Chase had agreed to buy a three-million-dollar-plus participation in a loan to a Florida marina project called Maximo Moorings. (The principal developer of the marina had also received oil-and-gas loans from Penn Square.) Jennings later recalled a meeting in the summer of that year—a meeting held in the office of Thomas Labrecque, the president of Chase Manhattan. This was the first time that the two men had met, although three years earlier Jennings had gone to Chase—had gone to the correspondent-banking division, of all places—looking for a loan buyer. Politely, he had been rebuffed. The meeting with Labrecque went differently. Jennings has recalled, "Labrecque said that he was well aware of the treatment I'd received a few years earlier. But he said that he was impressed by our activity with Continental Illinois and that his bank looked forward to being part of that relationship. He said that they intended to become our major correspondent bank."

The alliances that bound Penn Square and its various correspondent banks would, if rendered in a diagram, defy easy comprehensibility. A school friend of Patterson's mentions Penn Square to a banker from Continental Illinois. Before long, Continental believes in Penn Square and vice versa. A college-fraternity pal of Patterson's works for Northern Trust, and soon that bank is involved. Penn Square finds its way to Seattle-First by apparent happenstance. Everywhere you look in America, industries are dying. Oil-and-gas is not dying. Michigan National calls upon Continental Illi-



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nois. Chase Manhattan bumps into Northern Trust. Michigan National consults Chase Manhattan. A foamy egalitarian spirit—the spirit of opportunity—suffuses these relationships. None of the bankers who came to Oklahoma to deal with Penn Square were handcuffed and blindfolded. They were all looking, as they say in banking, "to put out assets." And they were looking at one another. A pyramid was at work—not a pyramid scheme but a pyramid of belief: I believe in you and you believe in me and we are all in this together.

Yet for all the talking that the money-center bankers did among themselves, they did not discuss their Oklahoma bonanza with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, where there were officials who cared plenty about the Penn Square Bank. Therefore, the bankers did not know that federal bank examiners had spent a month in early 1980 looking closely at Penn Square and had found "a combination of financial, operational, or compliance weaknesses ranging from moderately severe to unsatisfactory." In the wary eyes of the Comptroller, Penn Square was burdened by excessively rapid growth, inadequate capital, and strained liquidity. Its employees were overworked, its loan portfolio was out of balance, its lending policies were insufficiently defined, its committee structure and credit-review apparatus were inadequate. Technical violations of banking laws abounded. The directors of Penn Square were required to sign a formal agreement to make the bank's business proper. Penn Square was, in sum, a bank that required "special supervisory attention." The upstream bankers knew none of this, because no one told them. They knew only what they could learn by reading Penn Square's financial statement each quarter, and they saw a bank that was growing and thriving. Patterson and Jennings were rapturous salesmen. Everyone was having an enchanting time. —MARK SINGER

(This is the first part of a three-part article.)

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[*From the Washington Post*]

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

RETURN TO VIETNAM—I

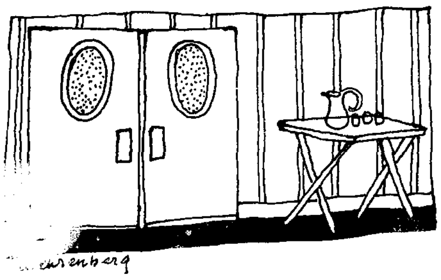
A DOOR opened at the far end of the room, and a Vietnamese of medium height with a glistening shock of white hair walked briskly toward me, smiling broadly. He was wearing an open-necked blue-gray cotton shirt and trousers to match, and after we shook hands he beckoned for me to sit down beside him on an overstuffed couch. We were in the capacious salon of the former French High Commissioner's palace in Hanoi, which is now used by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for receiving guests. Le Duc Tho, seventy-three years old, and a senior member of Vietnam's Politburo, gave me a look that seemed both reflective and quizzical, almost as if he were refreshing his memory of an unfamiliar type of being. "You are the first American I have seen since Paris," he said, with another smile.

I murmured my thanks for his hospitality, expressed my gratification at having this chance to return to Vietnam, for the first time in more than nine years, and reminded him that we had met in Paris in the fall of 1972, during the peace talks he conducted with Henry Kissinger. I complimented him on how well he looked, for he gave every appearance of being as physically strong and alert as he had been when he craftily outnegotiated Kissinger and, by ultimately gaining permission for North Vietnamese troops to remain in South Vietnam after the Americans withdrew, in effect set the stage for Hanoi's final, stunning victory two and a half years later, in April, 1975.

My reminiscent appraisal of Tho's sharpness of mind was thoroughly borne out in the next four hours, at the outset of which he summarized a number of questions I had sent him before we met: comparisons of the two historic wars of resistance waged by the Vietnamese, first against the French and then against the Americans, and comments on the long, difficult relationship between Vietnam and China, which was once described by both countries as "like lips and teeth" but since 1979 has degenerated into open hostility and sporadic violence along their common border; the continuing war waged in Cambodia by the Vietnamese, which has exacerbated the Sino-Vietnamese dispute; and, finally, Vietnam's internal situation today.

As Tho spoke—without interruption except for expert translations by an interpreter, a diplomat named Nguyen Dinh Phuong, who had been a member of Tho's staff in Paris and is fluent in French, English, and Vietnamese—I was astonished at the clarity and precision of his replies, and at the astute way in which he marshalled them. What struck me most as he went on, almost in the manner of a professor delivering a perfectly planned lecture, was his combination of cold, tough, doctrinaire Communist reasoning, ideologically pro-Soviet and anti-Chinese, with a sustained note of rectitude that had in it elements of zealotry and of reproach to Vietnam's enemies. Given Tho's position as the most likely successor to Le Duan as Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Vietnam, his answers seemed particularly significant. Absolute belief in the importance of the Vietnamese revolution—which, he stressed, was still unfolding and was unique—and in the principles guiding it was the burden of Tho's recitation, but something else that came through, especially toward the end, offered a clue to why he had agreed to see me.

After reiterating the distinction that the Vietnamese so frequently make between the American people and their government, Tho said, with emphasis, "We do wish that normalization of relations may come sooner rather than later." He professed inability to understand United States policy since 1975, especially under President Reagan. He was also particularly emphatic in his comments on the future of Cambodia (the initial invasion of which by Vietnam, late in 1978, he had directed). A settlement could best be achieved, he said, "through bilateral negotiations of the sort I conducted in Paris with Kissinger." In this case, he apparently meant talks between, on the one hand, the Vietnamese and the Thais, or possibly the Vietnamese and the Chinese, and, on the other, the various Cambodian factions, including the Vietnamese-installed-and-supported government of Heng Samrin and political groups in a coalition that opposes him. He did not mention Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former chief of state of Cambodia who is now the formal head of that coalition, or Son Sann, the other non-Communist leader. But he made it clear that such talks could not include Pol Pot, the head of the Communist faction known as the Khmer Rouge, which was responsible for murdering a million or more Cambodians in the course of the four-year reign of terror following the Communist takeover in 1975; Pol Pot's troops today constitute a majority of the sixty-thousand-man army that is fighting almost three times as many Vietnamese and thirty thousand of Heng Samrin's soldiers along the Cambodian-Thai border and in some inland regions of Cambodia. "I can definitely say our troops will not remain in Cambodia," Tho went on. "In a word, we want to pull out. But our withdrawal depends on the adversaries of the Kampuchean people." He implied that the United States could play a useful role by persuading the Chinese to cease assisting Pol Pot, and he said that he did not rule out the possibility, once bilateral agreements were reached, of international guarantees to support a settlement—even, ultimately, including elections of some sort.



MY interview with Le Duc Tho (to which I shall return) was one of the high points of six weeks I spent recently mostly in Vietnam, with a few days in Cambodia. I travelled over much of the country, and in the part I had once known well, south of the Seventeenth Parallel, visited places I had particularly wanted to see after a decade's absence, including Hué, Danang, Quang Tri, and Saigon—now officially Ho Chi Minh City. I had not been in the north since 1951, when it was still in French hands, and, to my surprise, I found Hanoi essentially unscarred by American bombing, and, though run-down and shabby, still beautiful architecturally, and gracefully landscaped, with rows of flowering tamarind trees along most avenues and streets, and with well-tended public parks and gardens.

Many of the old, cracked stucco colonial buildings, both public and private, were being repaired, despite an obvious shortage of cement, paint, and other materials. Potholes in the streets were being filled by teams of women wearing kerchiefs over their mouths and pulling carts of tar and sand. Since there were relatively few cars and trucks, the potholes were mainly hazards for bicycles, thousands of which provide Hanoi's primary means of transportation and are a constant threat to pedestrians, who have to duck in and out among the swarms of hurtling bikes and the occasional motorized vehicles which are the sworn enemies of the cyclists. Moving tranquilly and neutrally in the center of the main streets, like tired caterpillars, are a few fifty-year-old orange-and-yellow French trolleys. Foreigners are not permitted to ride these, but I was free to walk through the streets of the city and stop off in shops or markets as I wished, and I had no sense of being followed or observed except by ordinary people. Somebody would occasionally ask if I was Russian, and when I replied, "No, American"—the Vietnamese word for "American" is "*My*"—would smile or nod and hurry on. Vietnamese are not supposed to talk to foreigners except under specific authorization, and my efforts to strike up a conversation in French or English were usually cut short after a few minutes. Western diplomats in the country, even those who speak Vietnamese, told me that this happens all the time. "The best I can do is ten or fifteen minutes at a stretch," one of them said. "Then my companions always find an excuse to leave. It's not that people don't want to talk but that they're afraid. You may not have noticed, but the police, in uniform or in civilian clothes, are everywhere, and so are informers."

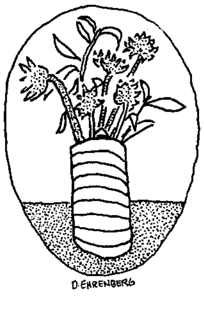
"This is nothing to cackle about, Madam!"

• •

During a month I spent in the north, I was able to meet most of the top officials I had asked to see, and also experts in various fields that I was particularly interested in, ranging from economics and military history to writing and the state of literature. In these interviews, which were sometimes followed by informal lunches, I encountered no reluctance on the part of my hosts or guests to converse freely, which is not the usual experience, I learned, of the handful of foreign correspondents, whether Communist or Western, who have been stationed regularly in Hanoi. Indeed, I detected a hunger for communication on the part of most Vietnamese I met officially; they seemed eager both to listen and to expound on topics of common concern. Beyond that, they frequently reached out to establish rapport with me as an American. Time and again, I was pointedly reminded that around the corner from my hotel—an old, dilapidated place called the Thang Nhut (the name means "reunification")—was a newly painted green stucco building that had formerly been the American consulate and that stands ready for reoccupancy as soon as the United States government decides to establish some sort of relations with Vietnam. Between the spring of 1977 and the fall of 1978, a series of preliminary talks between the two countries came close to tentative agreement, but they fell apart over the demands by Hanoi (finally withdrawn) for several billion dollars in reparations to "heal the wounds of war;" over the Vietnamese military buildup along the Cambodian border; over the heightened Soviet influence in Vietnam; and over the growing exodus of refugees. Moreover, Congress was said to be strongly against any move toward recognition. Then the Carter Administration decided to recognize China, and the whole subject of Vietnam was relegated to the far back burner. The Vietnamese thereupon signed a treaty of friendship and coöperation with the Soviet Union. Since then, the Cambodian war, the still unresolved question of finding and identifying the remains of several hundred of the twenty-five hundred Americans missing in action in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia considered to be identifiable, and a number of other matters have led to little or no progress.

It is difficult to persuade the Vietnamese that they no longer are given high diplomatic priority in Washington, particularly in view of their occupation of Cambodia. The current dry-season Vietnamese offensive there, which began in the late fall of 1984 and has continued this spring, and was directed first against the non-Communist forces of the opposition and then against the stronger Khmer Rouge elements, has been the fiercest ever, and indicates that the Vietnamese are determined to crush as much resistance as they can before agreeing even to negotiate. Now, having destroyed all the major base camps of the opposing coalition, they are likely to face strong guerrilla resistance over a wider area when the wet season begins, in May. As long as Vietnam persists in its present policy, the chances of its reaching any sort of serious accommodation with the United States are slight, though discussions continue irregularly on some other issues.

On a number of occasions when a breakthrough has seemed possible on one or more of these issues, such as the missing Americans or the organized emigration to the United States of the seven to ten thousand Vietnamese political prisoners or former prisoners with wartime American associations, follow-up efforts have proved inconclusive. Nevertheless, when I left Vietnam I was convinced, on the basis of what Le Duc Tho and others had told me and what was occurring on the larger diplomatic front, that the Vietnamese not only want to draw closer to the United States and to diminish their military and economic dependence on the Soviet Union but also want to mend their more dangerous breach with China. The latter is the real key to the situation. Sooner or later, most observers believe, the Vietnamese and the Chinese will reach some sort of agreement. ("It will happen not in twenty years but within five years," Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach confidently predicted, when I spoke with him.) But here again, and to a greater extent with the Chinese than with the Americans, Cambodia is the stumbling block; the current Vietnamese offensive has elicited fresh aid from China to the Cambodian opposition and, after several months of sporadic artillery exchanges across the Sino-Vietnamese border, and fresh positioning of troops on both sides, the stepped-up Vietnamese campaign in Cambodia has raised the possibility of a new attack on Vietnam by Chinese forces—"to teach the Vietnamese a second lesson," as the Chinese put it. The situation has been further aggravated by an increase in Soviet aid to the Samrin government; the Russians were already supplying the Vietnamese Army with virtually all its equipment and ammunition.

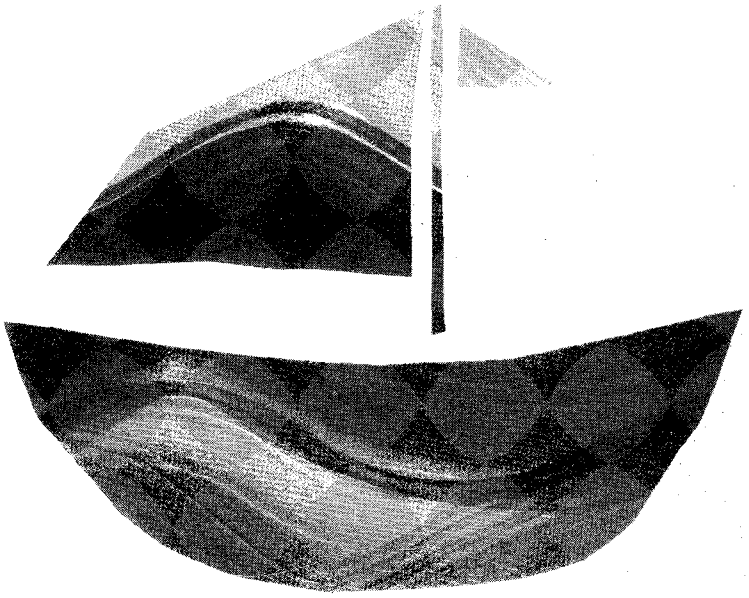


Partly because of a realization that improved relations with China will require time and patience, and that the vital Cambodian issue, in particular, will not be settled overnight, the Vietnamese have recently adopted a fresh approach in their efforts to resolve or ameliorate some of their other differences with the United States. The precipitating factor, however, was their growing concern about being further isolated, as a result of renewed and more friendly talks last December between the Chinese and the Russians over the possibility of reconciling their long-standing differences, and ongoing talks between the Chinese and the Americans over establishing closer ties, military as well as economic and cultural. As China has thus emerged in the strongest position it has enjoyed to date as a balancing force between the two superpowers, the Vietnamese have responded with deep consternation. It was only after months of high-level debate in Hanoi that new signals began to be sent. At a meeting of the Politburo held in Hanoi in mid-December, a decision was taken to adopt a more "flexible" foreign policy, aimed especially at improving bilateral relations with the United States and persuading the Americans to play a larger role in the region and perhaps eventually to help settle the Cambodian problem. All this, in line with what Le Duc Tho had told me, was substantiated in my subsequent conversations with Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach, both before I left Vietnam and when I saw him in New York upon my return home.

IN February, for only the second time since 1975, the Vietnamese acceded to repeated requests from American officials to permit an American identification team to inspect a site near Hanoi where one of our bombers was known to have gone down during the war; the inspection, as it turned out, was only casual, but Vietnam also agreed to return the remains of five more American airmen who had been shot down, and thus raised the total since the end of the war to about a hundred. At the same time, Laotian officials agreed, after a year's delay, to permit an American team to enter southern Laos to search for the remains of thirteen men shot down in 1972. (Some were found and taken to Hawaii.) The matter of remains is still an extremely touchy one. Hanoi has not accounted for the bodies of four hundred Americans which, according to testimony before a congressional committee in 1980 by a onetime Vietnamese mortician who is now a refugee in the United States, are being held in a warehouse in Hanoi. When I asked Vietnamese officials about this story, they either denied or were evasive about the charge that they are doling out remains a few at a time. They reiterated that they were doing what they could to find all remains, and emphasized that, given the continuing anti-American feelings and the bitterness of Vietnamese villagers who were the chief victims of bombing attacks, it had not been easy to go out into the rural areas to look for evidence. Yet despite the more forthcoming attitude now being shown by the Vietnamese, the feeling persists that they have been dragging their feet on the issue for a long time. A number of relatives of missing men, and several technicians who serve regularly on the identification teams that are now supposed to visit Hanoi six times a year, also believe it possible that a few Americans—perhaps half a dozen—may still be alive in Vietnam and either are being held in remote places or, as seems more likely, are hiding out and living there on their own. Although there have been some unconfirmed sightings by European scientific experts of "white Occidentals" in Vietnam since the end of the war, there has been no confirmation of any Americans living there since Private Robert Garwood, a Marine turncoat, left voluntarily in 1979 and was repatriated to the United States. Garwood claimed to have personally seen or heard of about sixty resident Americans, but he has refused to testify before a congressional committee and his accounts are not regarded as trustworthy by American officials.

The more I talked to foreign diplomats in Hanoi about Vietnam's relations with the outside world, and particularly with the United States and China, and the more I learned about the precarious internal economic and social situation in which the Vietnamese still find themselves ten years after the war, the more strongly persuaded I became that if they are to solve their internal and external difficulties they will first have to come to terms with their situation in ways they have not yet attempted. This would mean making adjustments and compromises that are as much psychological and emotional as practical and political. The problem is historical, in that it requires a distillation to separate the past from the present, to bring about a catharsis that will lighten the almost mythical burden of an era that created incredible victories in war but left the Vietnamese unprepared to deal with the tasks of development in peacetime. This failure derives in large part from a confused identification of military victory with political stability and legitimacy. In fairness to the Vietnamese, some of the problems stem from forces beyond their control, including traditional Chinese expansionism and antagonism; an abysmal colonial heritage from the French, which put them in no position to assume the responsibilities of self-government; and a degree of calculated indifference since 1975 on the part of the United States, which is still experiencing the guilt and shame of having met its first defeat in war. Much of it, however, has been the fault of the Vietnamese, who have demonstrated their share of hubris and a crippling inability to create unity among themselves and to reach out to others, including their neighbors in Southeast Asia, in a spirit of friendship and compromise.

Finally, part of the problem is a generational one, of which the Vietnamese are very much aware, for they see the older revolutionary leaders, in their seventies, who have dominated the scene for half a century, confronting the stark reality of their mortality. When I brought this up with Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, who is seventy-seven and physically somewhat enfeebled, he replied that it was a matter he thought about constantly. Of the men still alive, he was closest to the legendary President Ho Chi Minh, who died in 1969, and his answer revealed how strongly the hallowed memory of Ho endures yet also indicated a growing awareness that this memory is not, in changing times, enough of a guide. "How to make all the generations go forward with the flame that has been handed down from President Ho, that is the main thing," the Prime Minister said, with passion. After a moment's pause, he went on, more quietly, "As the head of a commission on educational reform, I attach great importance to this question. I believe that the younger generation will do better than we have. We shall avoid what you call 'the generation gap.' We shall see that our country's youth and the generation in the middle will go forward and meet new tasks and challenges with intelligence, understanding, and creativity." Having said this, with what seemed to me more hope than conviction, he touched on a matter that has aroused particular concern among the older leaders. "We know that young people have their own aspirations—that they want better clothes, some up-to-date fashions, a richer culture. These things should be welcome. That's progress, and we're not fighting it. But their minds and spirits are important. We must keep



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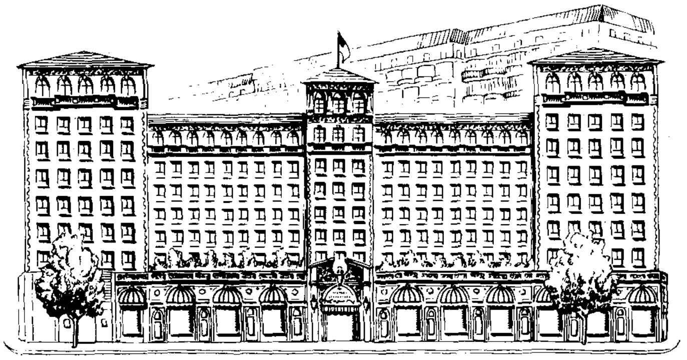

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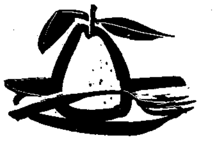
their minds and spirits Vietnamese, and the achievement of our young people will then be great. In ten years' time, we shall see."

IT was the last part of Pham Van Dong's answer that seemed to reveal the primary source of concern among those who are grappling today with the problems that Vietnam is facing. Not the least of these is keeping a large army in Cambodia at a time when the country needs manpower for reconstruction and production at home. Meanwhile, poor planning and bad management have only emphasized the significant differences between the northern and southern halves of the nation; they have helped create unnecessary poverty and a fifteen- or twenty-per-cent rate of unemployment. What is perhaps most serious is a growing malaise and a general atmosphere of bureaucratic stasis. In this context, the Cambodian war—though it has been the main reason for the almost complete cutoff of more than two hundred million dollars a year in Western European and Japanese aid, and was a principal factor in China's curtailment of a five-year aid program worth almost a billion dollars—has become a treadmill: the country's leaders are almost afraid to stop and get off, because the economic consequences of withdrawal and demobilization might be greater than the relatively low cost (about twenty million dollars a year in wages, clothes, and medical care) of keeping so many men occupied at a distance from the uncertain situation at home. Moreover, while there are recent signs that some of the major problems in agriculture have finally been confronted and are being dealt with pragmatically, there remain large and far-reaching ideological differences about the future course of the country. After so many years of dislocation, the pattern of overall production and distribution is extremely uneven, and this adds to the confusion over planning and implementation.

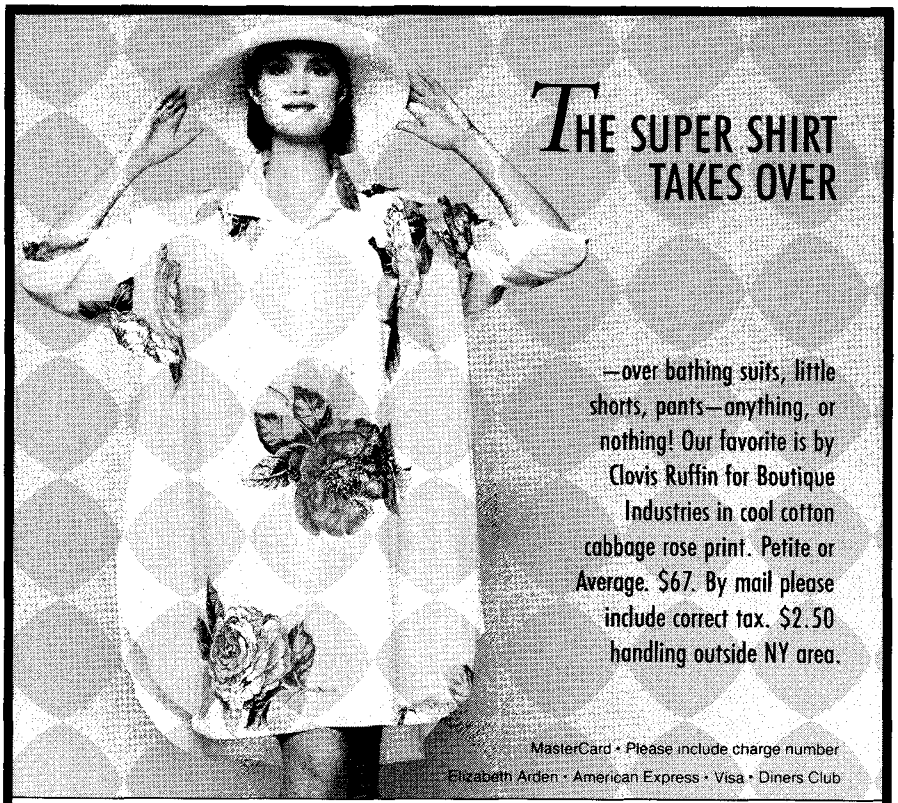


Though Vietnam is blessed with unusually plentiful natural resources, it remains shockingly poor and undeveloped today, with a per-capita income of about a hundred and fifty dollars a year. Differences in living standards are wide, and to a considerable extent the nation survives on "the second economy"—moonlighting. This has provoked increasing friction between emerging elements of haves and have-nots—elements that include the troops fighting in Cambodia and living off the land there in strange and often unfriendly surroundings, and people back home, particularly in the south but also in parts of the north, for whom life has become easier largely because they have benefitted from new economic incentives created by the government. In fact, the military, being traditionally conservative, is especially suspicious of the liberal agricultural reforms refined and initiated in the past two years by the so-called "pragmatists," who, in the current political dialogue, are opposed by Old Guard "ideologues." For the moment, under the leadership of Secretary-General Le Duan, who is seventy-six years old, and the majority of the Politburo (it numbers thirteen, including two alternate members), the pragmatists are in control, but the issue is by no means fully settled, and probably won't be for several years. Ironically, at this time of bitter conflict with China there are similarities between the goals of the Vietnamese pragmatists, who condone a limited free market, individual incentives, and greater management autonomy, and the objectives of those directing China's far more extensive program of modernization, which includes the institution of a broader market economy and a return to some capitalist practices. The irony is compounded by the fact that both the Chinese and the Vietnamese insist that their respective systems do not digress from Marxism but denounce each other's as having strayed far from the Marxist-Leninist fold. The argument, except among scholars and theoreticians, has become moot, for both countries are one-party, authoritarian states with their own dogmas, which they alter and adjust as they see fit, and with little leeway for free discussion or tolerance of public dissent. Observers who have studied China and Vietnam over the past decade, however, agree that there is far more "socialist dynamism" today in China, and certainly more enthusiasm.

"There is no incentive in Vietnam except on the black and gray markets," one Western diplomat now in Hanoi told me. "Everything since the war here has been anticlimactic. What kept people going for so long, against the French and then against the Americans, was the siege mentality, and it provided a remarkable drive and force. But now that the big wars are over there is no substitute for its élan, and this accounts for the malaise—for the lack of ambition, ingenuity, and imagination. And for something that may be more dangerous in the long run—for an unfocussed discontent among the younger cadres, both those who are serving their three years in the Army and those who have been discharged. They're missing something, but they don't know what it is or how to get it. Cambodia is not enough of an inspiration. Those who go abroad to Russia or to Eastern Europe to study or to work return with their experience and with degrees or some money, but no one knows what to do with them once they're back. Their knowledge is useless, because there has not been enough development in Vietnam to prepare the way for them. What they really need is a basic education in job-related skills—vocational training—but there's very little of that. They don't know how to do the simplest jobs, and the expertise they've acquired abroad means nothing in a society where industrial growth has scarcely begun. So they hang around cafés or act as interpreters, or simply disappear into the woodwork."

IN the various cities I visited, most notably Danang and the rechristened Saigon (which very few Vietnamese remember to call Ho Chi Minh City), I saw scores of men and women in their twenties and thirties sitting at all hours in cafés and coffee shops or aimlessly milling around in public parks and squares and on street corners. In Danang, at the foot of Marble Mountain, which was the scene of constant guerrilla skirmishes during the war and is now a tourist center, featuring stone carvers and a rest center, with a beach nearby for factory workers, I ran into a group of Army veterans, including a gaunt young man on crutches who told me that he had been wounded at Chu Lai, not far to the south, in August of 1965, and that he lived on a small pension. "There is no work," he said tonelessly. "There is a lot of unemployment in Danang. Things are not good here." When I said that I was an American, he asked me how much money I made, and then, without waiting for an answer, pointed to a small teen-age boy watching us, who was obviously a black Amerasian—the offspring of a black G.I. and a Vietnamese woman. The boy—one of about ten thousand Amerasian children in Vietnam—told me that he didn't know where his mother was, let alone his father, but that he hoped to go to America "soon." The crippled veteran and his friends listened to this conversation with apparent disdain. "There are a lot like him around here," the veteran said, waving his crutch at me. In Huê, in one of the buildings at the tomb of the Emperor Tu Duc, I came across four men in their late twenties who were part-time maintenance workers there. One of them had a guitar, and they were singing Vietnamese love songs softly. They had only recently been discharged from the Army and were receiving two hundred dong a month—about twenty dollars at the official rate and one dollar at the black-market rate—plus food rations. "We'd like to go back to the university," the boy with the guitar said, "but we have to work to help our families."

In Ho Chi Minh City, two of the old restaurants along Dong Khoi Street, which used to be Tu-Do Street during the American war, and which I had first known as Rue Catinat in the mid-forties, under the French regime, were packed at noon and in the evening with crowds of young men and women. At one of the places, a small band, including a saxophone and a trumpet, played out-of-sync jazz interspersed with Western rock, and at the other a man at an ancient piano tinkled a mixture of Vietnamese ballads and old American popular tunes. The government now reluctantly concedes that, even after a decade of attempted reforms, the south—particularly the former Saigon—remains "culturally decadent." An article last year in *Tap Chi Cong San*, a magazine devoted to Party theory, criticized southerners for "not attending the recommended cultural things but the ones that are not recommended." It admitted that "not too much progress has been made in eradicating all this," and bemoaned that "twenty years of U.S. puppet regime rule has left its impact." Specifically condemned were "no-holds-barred comedians" and films showing "Kung Fu scenes, knife-fights, pistol scenes, car-motorcycle chases, bedroom scenes, drunkenness and revelry, improper bathing, off-color songs, and lewd styles of performance such as senseless gyrations." The article went on to lament that, despite cleanup campaigns to get rid of half a million copies of undesirable magazines and newspapers, mostly Western publications that had been



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smuggled in, in 1980 and 1981, a black market still existed for such undesirable material. "Whether we like it or not, it's a fact of life that incorrect aesthetic tastes are still widespread," the article said, and concluded, somewhat lamely, "So we must wipe out decadent works and create good works."

Even in Hanoi, where one feels a greater sense of discipline and control—during most of my stay in the city the police were regularly checking identity cards on the sidewalks by blocking off one street at a time—I found that there was relative freedom to congregate and move about. The area around the picturesque Hoan Kiem Lake, in the center of the city—surely one of the loveliest spots in any capital in the world—was always crowded with youthful couples strolling or resting on the grass and with children playing, and the outdoor cafés rimming the lake were full of customers and sightseers. On weekends and holidays, the atmosphere was positively buoyant—most notably during the Independence Day period early in September and the annual Children's Festival later in the month, when many of the streets were all but awash with spinning plastic toys. On both occasions, the crowds were so heavy at the lake and in other parts of town that it was hard to make one's way about. Both Vietnamese and Westerners told me that the mood of the city had changed greatly in the past five or six years, and that some of this was undoubtedly due to the influence of the south, partly because so many northerners had served in the Army or as government cadremen down south or had begun to visit relatives and friends there regularly. Bui Tin, an amiable man who is the deputy editor of *Nhan Dan*, the Party paper, which is the country's largest, and who was a military hero in both the French and the American wars, said that he first noticed the change around 1977, in habits and modes of dress. "It began when both girls and boys started wearing elephant-ear pants" (similar to bell-bottoms), he said. "They're still worn today, but the newer fads are jeans and close-fitting linen or cotton shirts, or T-shirts with American names on them. For a while in 1978, the police would stop youngsters on the streets and tell them to go home and change their clothes and cut their long hair, but now the new styles are pretty much accepted. It's been several years since the girls started wearing more colorful clothes, and lipstick. There's an increase in consumer goods, despite many shortages, and that's what has made a big difference. Television now comes right into the bedroom. Where do people get the money? By and large, farmers have done well, and the workers in light industry around Hanoi are beginning to enjoy some benefits, too." Bui Tin, who has a twenty-six-year-old son and a twenty-one-year-old daughter, went on to discuss the attitudes of today's youth. "It's hard to explain to them what our generation went through—to get them to understand that during the war just for us to have meat was a rare treat," he said. "It's only natural that they're interested in getting some enjoyment out of life—taking pleasure in fresh air and sunlight, and going out on picnics. But this makes it hard for them to grasp the idea of the problems we face as a nation. They have simply become too impatient for the good things of life."

Later, when I talked to Hoang Tung, a former editor of *Nhan Dan*, who is now the chief of propaganda and a member of the ten-man Party Secretariat, which ranks just below the Politburo, he acknowledged that youthful unrest indeed exists and is serious. Like Bui Tin, Hoang Tung is a veteran of both resistance wars and, despite a rather flat voice and a gloomy appearance, he, too, has a frank and open manner, with a touch of the common man about him. "During the revolution, at every turning point we have been able to obtain good participation by the youth, although not all of it was voluntary and youth had to be mobilized," he said. "At the outset, in the forties, some responded to Ho's call, but it was foreign aggression that really brought them around. The French used every stratagem to gain their support, but colonialism remained colonialism, and youth joined our cause. When the American war started, we had to mobilize the youth all over again, and in many respects it was harder. After a revolution, it is always difficult to maintain the support of youth. We are now facing that challenge once more—especially in the south. The billions of dollars the Americans poured into the country and the habits of living they introduced naturally had a strong impact, and, in fact, there are still enemy forces today that are trying to undermine our society. We are trying in many ways to persuade young people to give up their selfish individualism and their fast way of life. These selfish individuals you see in the big cities are not all over the country. Young people are still joining the Army and are fighting and dying. And others, in schools throughout the countryside, are studying hard to understand the progressive nature of society and the value of productive work. So we feel that we can still win our youth over, in spite of the problems that always exist in a postwar generation."

LISTENING to Hoang Tung, Bui Tin, and others, and trying to weigh what they said against some of my own observations and what Westerners living in Hanoi told me, took me back in strange ways to the past—to endless discussions about the same sorts of subjects which my Vietnamese friends and I used to have in Saigon and elsewhere before and during the war. Certainly the South Vietnamese government faced many of the same problems that the northerners face now in trying to win the support of youth, and it did not succeed nearly as well. But, beyond the youth question and other matters of morale and popular response, I was struck by the fact that after only a few days back in the country, and in unfamiliar Hanoi rather than in Saigon, I felt truly at home among the people I met. And the longer I stayed, and travelled about, the more I realized that some of the things I had felt and observed before were still very much the same—or, at least, my reaction to them was.

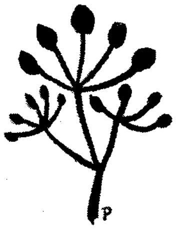
As I thought about this, trying to put my long absence in focus and to separate my responses from nostalgia, it seemed to me that Vietnam and the Vietnamese, in the many years I have known the country and the people, have always been, and still are, possessed of far more than the customary quota of national anomalies and contradictions. Because of the stresses they have had to contend with in defending themselves against foes almost constantly throughout their history, they have paid an extreme emotional, psychological, and intellectual price. Xenophobia runs deep in them, and suspicion and mistrust have become part of their normal attitude. Ambivalent and unpredictable, they can be devious, calculating, self-driven, abrasive, and exasperating one moment, and amenable, sympathetic, generous, and outgoing the next. Charm for charm's sake is not one of their prime attributes, but they can be disarmingly—or, sometimes, brutally—open and frank. Also highly secretive at times and given to clandestine approaches, they are adept at guile and machinations, yet they can be naïve, artless, and ingenuous to the point of self-delusion. Their humor is often black—sardonic, wicked, macabre—but it can be playful and childlike, too. Their capacity for cruelty is matched by a low threshold for pain, but over the war years torture and suffering have enhanced their belief in fate, while often inspiring compassion, tenderness, and solicitude. The sharing of hardship, in battle or behind prison bars, creates permanent bonds. Sentimental and romantic, as reflected in their poetry and prose, they can be distant and uncaring. Such qualities as loyalty and treachery, sacrifice and betrayal have special, often convoluted meanings for them, whose origin seems deeply imbedded in their long and violent history of dynastic and familial disputes, of fighting against heavy odds to defend their sense of self and their national identity. The shrines of their memory are crowded with more victims than victors; they have more pride than humility, and more cunning than caution. I often felt, during the years of war, and especially during the American war, that they exhibited what was almost a compulsion for self-destruction, while at the same time they demonstrated—as they are still demonstrating—a unique capacity for survival. Their determination and their belief in themselves are extraordinary, as was proved dramatically by the tougher and infinitely more clever and patient northerners in their long fight to defeat the French and then the Americans and also their southern compatriots, who lacked both their physical stamina and emotional willpower.

What I found most interesting during my recent visit was that many—perhaps most—of these contradictions are still confounding Westerners, and other Asians, too, who try to follow the elusive course of the Vietnamese revolution and to understand why the Vietnamese act as they do, ostensibly to their own continuing disadvantage. One of the anomalies that Americans in South Vietnam used to comment on and complain about was the stubborn sense of individualism among the Vietnamese, which often made it difficult to negotiate a compromise with them on military or political matters or on any others. The southerners demonstrated this to what seemed a destructive degree. There was no doubt that, in contrast, the sense of unity and discipline that the Communists engendered and enforced in the north were prime reasons for their success. Once differences were resolved at the top, and the policies and programs decided by the Politburo were explained at meetings held at regional and local levels down the line, there was no divergence from the course established; it was carried out with dedication and zeal. The southerners fought among themselves and with the Americans throughout the war, sometimes about inconsequential things.

Now that the war is over, the conflict between individualism and regimentation remains peculiarly unresolved, and this situation may provide a key to many of the troubles the Vietnamese are experiencing. The difficulty that the north has had in creating a real, workable unity between the two parts of the country is just one of the more visible manifestations of this profound problem, which extends to all spheres of national life. It was summed up for me by a man who spent nearly four years heading one of the principal international-aid agencies in Vietnam, and who was based in Hanoi but spent much of his time travelling around both the north and the south. "Socialism simply doesn't work for the Vietnamese," he told me one day, almost despairingly. "They are far too individualistic. The state can run the railways and the utilities, but it's got to get out of retail trade, including marketing and distribution. Despite the heavy influence of the Soviet Union, not one of the Vietnamese I know has any interest in a system as a system. They all search for ways to get around any system—to cock a snook at authority. This is true from the government level all the way down to the moonlighting worker. And yet they still want to be highly centralized and state-run, to mobilize all the forces of the country, to make the coöperatives an organized success, and so on, while at the same time compromising with free enterprise and private gain. The question is: Can they have it both ways? Can they mix heresy and orthodoxy and get away with it?"

Clearly, the Vietnamese are determined to have it both ways, but whether they can get away with it indeed remains a question. Although the north has been a Communist state for forty years, and has undergone some of the classic crises of Communism, including a bitter struggle over radical land reform in the mid-nineteen-fifties, the nation has been so taken up with waging war that organizing and running an economy and a social structure are challenges it has only started to deal with. The basic role models of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, with their historical ups and downs and separate inconsistencies, to say nothing of their periods of hostility and probably permanent ideological breach, have confounded the Vietnamese far more than helped them in formulating their own concepts for solving the problems of a much smaller and far less developed nation, and one that was so devastated in the recent war. On top of that, the Vietnamese have been confronted with their own peculiar version of what Marxists like to describe as "inherent contradictions"—a version that transcends theory and dialectics, and in practical terms is almost schizoid. The vast differences in all respects, including cultural ones, between the north and the south, which are only now being partly acknowledged by some top Vietnamese leaders (others still dogmatically refuse to accept them), have made it virtually impossible to introduce national economic and social programs that are consistent, coördinated, and workable.

DURING the last two or three years of the war, when the possibility of a Communist victory became apparent, many South Vietnamese I knew used to debate the question of how the north would ultimately deal with the south. Some—especially northerners who had fled south after the nation was divided in 1954—firmly believed that the Communists would take over quickly, completely, and ruthlessly, with an administrative machinery that would be the equal in efficiency of the North Vietnamese Army. These people fully expected a bloodbath. Others were more hopeful; they included true believers in southern nationalism, which, though it was then weak compared with that in the north, had often demonstrated a vibrancy and momentum of its own, and there were people who were simply wishful thinkers and romantic liberals. Then, there were so-called "third force" elements, who included many professional, religious, and intellectual leaders with plenty of ideas but no cohesion and no troops of their own, and these elements and scattered southern Communists, Socialists, and former Trotskyists, including members of the old National Liberation Front and other front organizations, firmly believed in some form of southern "exceptionalism." They felt that socialism in the south, even under the banner of a united Communist nation, had to follow its own course and develop in its own way, and that the north would permit this to happen. The fact that the north proved to have no intention of allowing the south to do any such thing, and that, though there was no bloodbath, an indeterminate number of former southern political and religious leaders died in prisons or in reëducation camps (it has been estimated that at their height, in the early postwar period, the prisons and camps held several hundred thousand people), does not mean that the northerners, despite their harsh regimentation, succeeded in transmitting their Spartan precepts to the more easygoing southerners. On the contrary, after a decade of trial and error and of failures, the south has forced the adoption of some basic economic compromises, which the pragmatists in the Politburo and the Central Committee in Hanoi are now introducing.

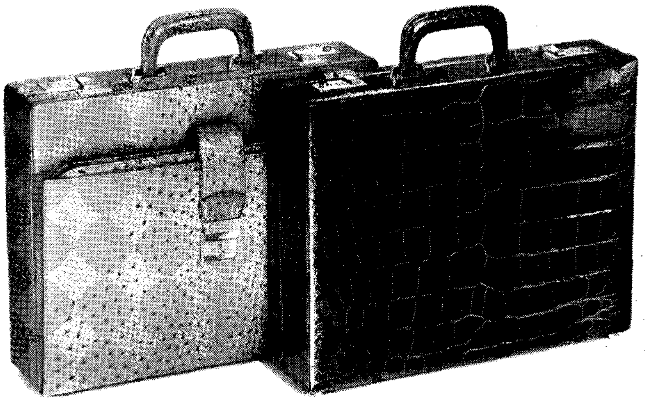


After visiting both parts of the country, I was left with the feeling that the circumstances and ways of life—and, perhaps more significant, patterns of thought—of the two regions remain as fundamentally different as ever. And it is hard to see how, given their separate historical developments, things could be otherwise. While all Vietnamese have always been stubbornly independent-minded, the northerners were never as thoroughly subjugated as the southerners were by the French during the century-long existence of Cochin China—roughly, what became known as South Vietnam—as an outright colonial domain. Tonkin, in the north, and Annam, in the center, were made protectorates rather than colonies, and though they were also completely under French domination and rule, they were not as economically important to the French as Cochin China, with its lush Mekong Valley rice lands, its rubber plantations, and its other assets. Cochin China, with Saigon as the famous "Pearl of the Orient," was the linchpin of the French empire. To the *colons*, the people of Cochin China were subjects and servants, to be used in any way the masters saw fit—the men as clerks or workers and the women as maids and, if so desired, as formal mistresses or lesser sexual partners; the French were considerably more tolerant of such liaisons, and also of mixed marriages, than either the British or the Dutch. What the French did not do, in contrast to the Dutch or the British, was give their Vietnamese civil servants any notion of independent decision-making or any responsibility or freedom of action. And any Vietnamese, in the central and northern parts of French Indo-China as well as in the south, who risked engaging in underground nationalist activities and were captured were subjected to imprisonment and torture far exceeding anything sanctioned by the British or the Dutch. When the French left, in 1954, and the South Vietnamese took over on their own, under President Ngo Dinh Diem and his malevolent brothers, the punishments continued to be meted out, and this went on right up to the end of the South Vietnamese regime, in 1975. The Americans, for their part, remained oddly aloof from such matters, but made their own contribution to the spiritual and moral debilitation of the southerners: they introduced consumerism, and by flooding the economy with commodities ranging from iceboxes and stereos to motorcycles, trucks, and jeeps, and from fast food to millions of PX items and gimmicks and gewgaws of every conceivable variety, they created a free and black market that provided hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese with their only source of income. The remnants of this ubiquitous and corrupt economy are still to be seen everywhere in Saigon, and, to a lesser extent, elsewhere in the south, and even in the north. The Americans, it should also be said, did far more than the French ever did to introduce modern technology into the south, and to train the Vietnamese to use it; but not much of this has survived or been utilized, although American-trained Vietnamese mechanics and other specialists have gradually been allowed to apply their knowledge, and use whatever machines and tools are still functioning in the absence of the spare parts and raw materials that the United States used to supply.

In many sections of Ho Chi Minh City, one still sees small machine shops buzzing with activity, but such sights are rare in downtown Hanoi. The sidewalks there are crowded with men working to repair ancient bicycles by hand, and it is easy to trip over a loose wheel or handlebar. At night, when a street light is out and there are not many pedestrians, one may come across small groups tinkering by flashlight with a car engine or some other piece of broken machinery, but because the larger machine and tool shops are on the outskirts of the city and are government-run, this variety of small-scale free enterprise is rare. Vegetables, fruits, fish, meats, and poultry, though, are sold everywhere in Hanoi—not only in the half-dozen large public markets but also all over the sidewalks, by women from the nearby countryside, and this unofficial sector of the free market provides the bulk of the city's commerce in food. The open market in food is similarly active in rural areas, as I observed during a day-long trip to the Chinese border and back, and also on a shorter trip, to the harbor of Haiphong. This one started with an early-morning stop on a small, verdant street famous for its outdoor soup-and-noodle shops, where my interpreter, Phuong, and I had delicious bowls of the soup the Vietnamese call *pho*. As we rode through town on our way to the two-mile Long Bien bridge, over the Red River, which was repeatedly bombed and constantly repaired during the war and is still undergoing extensive reconstruction, we passed through a commercial section, where Phuong pointed out old streets, dating back to pre-colonial days, that still bear names based on what they have always sold—silk, dyes, soap, cake, sugar, tin, paper, and so on. Some of these products are now distributed by coöperatives and others are marketed by individual traders.

In most parts of the city, and also in the outskirts, coffee shops still abound, but there are very few restaurants, because in the past year or so they have been heavily taxed as unwanted luxury establishments. Tailors, barbers, women's hairdressers, and other individual entrepreneurs offering services of one kind or another seem to keep busy, but numerous shops stocked with private art objects and government handicrafts are mostly without customers. Bookshops are well patronized. They sell mostly government and Party publications and scientific or educational books, along with some fiction and poetry. Translations from Russian are plentiful, and there are some from French, but translations from English are scarcer. During several visits I paid to a government-run department store three blocks from my hotel, the place was fairly crowded with people looking over the drab goods on the counters and commenting on their prices, but there were not many buyers. Some of the prices I noted, which should be rated according to the average worker's monthly salary, of three or four hundred dong (roughly a dollar and a half or two dollars at the black-market rate and thirty to forty dollars officially, plus fairly generous food, clothing, petrol, and other rations), were three hundred and eighty dong for a girl's embroidered blouse, two hundred and forty-five for a girl's simple dress, a hundred and fifty for a child's shirt, and from two hundred and fifty to four hundred for men's trousers. Guitars sold for three or four hundred dong, but combined radios and cassette recorders ranged from fifteen thousand to thirty thousand. Bicycles averaged from fifteen thousand to twenty-three thousand dong. In order to get by, even with rations and very low regulated rents, I was told, one needs at least a thousand extra dong a month. This accounts for the fact that just about everyone engages in moonlighting of one kind or another or buys and sells or barters goods on the side.

In the decade since the end of the war, the Vietnamese, particularly in the larger cities, have gone through so many economic ups and downs that they have become more adept than ever at doing what comes naturally to them—surviving at any cost in their own determined way, hoping for the best but expecting the worst, and effectively living from day to day. The worst period was not, as might be supposed, immediately after the war but some years later. A Frenchman named Jean Pierre Dubris, who has lived in Vietnam much of his adult life (he was arrested as an anti-war activist in Saigon at one point during the war, and is now a government translator in Hanoi), told me, "In the north in those early days after 1975, everyone—men, women, and children—



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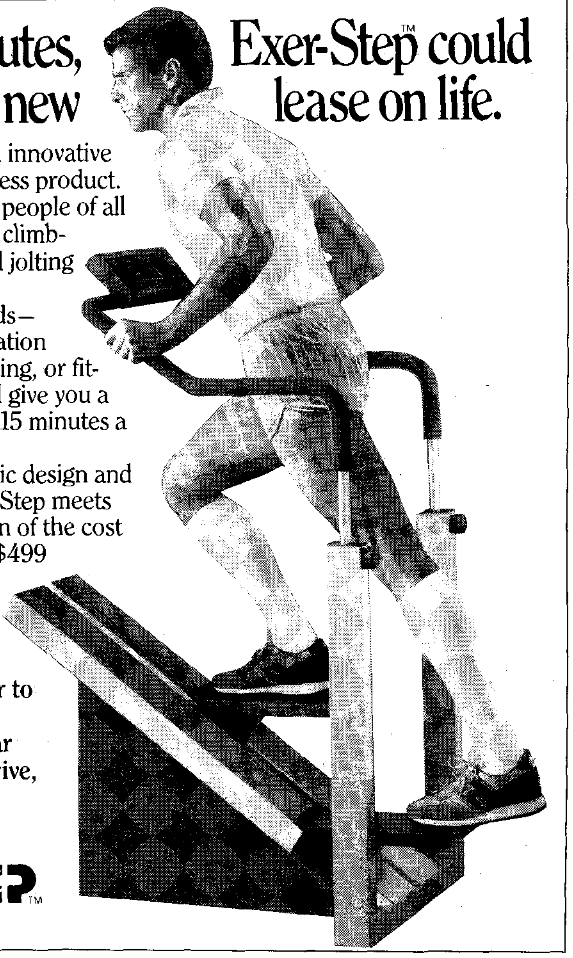

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wore green fatigues and huddled together to keep warm. We were all shivering. Whole families slept together in one bed. But the spirit of victory was in the air, and everyone pitched in to help repair the damage done by the bombing, and get things started again. There was enough food, because the Chinese were still sending us rice and other things—all in all, a quarter of our requirements. The really hard time began in 1978, when China cut off aid and then attacked us. Russian aid had hardly begun, and the Chinese thought they had us on the ropes. To make things worse, the weather was very bad, and the harvests were poor. The Army was already in Cambodia, and the heroes of the war in the north were the regional and local forces, who turned back the Chinese and eventually forced them to retreat, despite their false claims of victory.”

Just how bad conditions were in 1978 and 1979 is shown by the figures on total food production, which in 1978 reached a record national low of twelve million nine hundred thousand tons. This meant that the average Vietnamese received only two hundred and fifty-one kilograms of food that year. In contrast, between 1965 and 1973 the northerners themselves grew enough to supply each of their citizens with three hundred and twelve kilograms, and since the Chinese were donating about half a million tons of rice annually, the actual per-capita figure was three hundred and twenty-four kilograms. The 1978-79 crisis was so bad, in fact, that for the first time since the mid-fifties land-reform struggle defiance of the government was openly expressed—in this case, by hunger riots. In 1979, to wage their two-front war, in Cambodia and against China, the Vietnamese were forced to keep more than a million men under arms. The Army is still that size, and has regularly eaten up between a third and a half of the budget. The Chinese invasion, though it lasted only three weeks, destroyed half a dozen cities, a railway line, a power station, and—most serious, perhaps—an apatite (phosphate) mine that was the country’s main source of fertilizer; even today, six years later, the mine is operating at only about a third of capacity.

In the south, with about a billion dollars a year of American aid gone and no raw materials being imported, industry and virtually all business except black marketeering came to a standstill, and unemployment soared. Light industry, which had always been extensive in the southern area, suffered. In the north, meanwhile, the departure of Chinese workers and experts affected both light and heavy industries, including textiles and coal mining, but did not shut them down altogether, and the same was true of operations at the port of Haiphong, where the Chinese had traditionally held key jobs. Around this time, however, the northerners made their greatest mistake: they attempted to force rapid collectivization of agriculture and to destroy all capitalist trade in the south. This quickly aroused the antipathy and then the passive resistance of the southerners, so long accustomed to doing things their own way—or, at least, under the guiding hand of the French or the Americans. The Mekong Delta farmers especially, who were already beleaguered by the border attacks of the Khmer Rouge, resented the intrusion of the northern cadres and paid little or no attention to what they were told to do—they were used to working no more than a hundred or a hundred and fifty days a year, at their own pace and in their own random fashion. The overbearing northerners, if they didn’t succumb to the lures of leisurely southern life—as many did—were resented more and more as they made increasing efforts to “break the machine” of the south. This was Communist terminology for introducing new social and political institutions in the villages and towns, with no special concern for the mores and habits and traditions of southern life. Even in most of the villages that had been under Vietcong influence, observers later said, the northern Communists ran into trouble, and this was attributable in large part to the absence of southern Vietcong, who had been decimated during and after the costly Tet offensive of 1968.

IT is against this background of victory in war and initial failure and misjudgment in peace, coupled with Chinese hostility and bad luck, including bad weather, all of which, in Le Duan’s words, had created “a truly perilous situation,” that we must contemplate the most significant postwar development in Vietnam. This is an economic turnaround that began in 1979-80, but that, because of disagreements in the Politburo and the Central Committee and continuing poor management, did not gain real momentum until 1983, and then did so primarily in agriculture. Today, for the first time, there are signs that the Vietnamese may *finally* be formulating and executing plans that can move the nation toward a solution of many of its problems. This does not mean that the leaders have settled on a course that is either “correct,” in terms of Communist or Socialist theory, or easily applicable for the future. Nor does it mean that the economy is functioning well, or even satisfactorily. On the contrary, many imponderables and difficulties remain, and the conflict between the pragmatists now in control and the *minority of ideologues* is one that could create vast contention. This is something that could happen sectionally and generationally and with regard to the military as a political force—not perhaps in the sense that the Cultural Revolution and its Red Guards tore China apart in bizarre ways but in a manner that could prove almost as destructive. Serious questions remain about what kind of socialism, if any, the individualistic Vietnamese can adapt themselves to; and whether they can successfully get out from under the bleak domination of the Soviet Union, about which they have become disillusioned, while the doctrinaire Russians have grown increasingly fretful about them; and whether, once the Cambodian situation is under control, they can chart a more independent course, and become, along with Laos and Cambodia, a neutral buffer region between China and Japan, to the north, and the increasingly prosperous Southeast Asian nations, to the south.

A positive resolution of all these questions could point to a rosy future for Vietnam, given its wealth of resources. Many observers, looking on the country as a logical geopolitical part of Southeast and South Asia, believe that, notwithstanding the events of the past several decades, Vietnam, once having made peace with China, could indeed act as a bridge between the Chinese and the Southeast Asians, with their large overseas Chinese populations. Where this would leave the deeper conflict between Communism and democratic capitalism is, of course, not very clear, particularly in light of the strong military hold that the Russians have over Vietnam, a recent expression of new interest on the part of the Russians in playing a stronger diplomatic role in Southeast Asia, the continuing Sino-Russian contest for power, and the distinction that Communists make between inter-Party and intergovernmental relations (which gives the Party freedom of maneuver). All of this makes it more difficult for the Vietnamese to deal with Asia, let alone the rest of the world, less fearfully and suspiciously, more realistically and rationally.

When I spoke to Le Duc Tho about some of these questions in relation to domestic problems, he referred at once, almost reflexively, as the Vietnamese are wont to do, to the backwardness of the country and to the fact that in its forty years of revolutionary existence it has been almost constantly at war. "Kissinger used to tell me that we know how to wage war but not peace," he said. "But it's not that we don't know how to deal with peace. Our problem has been lack of time and experience—how in the short space of a decade to sort out the objective and subjective conditions, and, particularly, how to handle our shortcomings in economic management. I think we are now finding ways to disentangle this situation. You must remember that Vietnam is an agricultural country, and that we have to find management methods suitable to that while facing the consequences of the destruction in the American war of most of what industry we had. And that industry was geared to war production, not to production for peace. Our method of management during the war was bureaucratic; that is, the government directed and supplied everything. You can call it conservative. After liberation, this method was no longer applicable. We have had to find ways of combining unified leadership from the center with extending to the provinces and districts the right to solve their own problems, to become more dynamic by themselves. Unified centralism, as it is applied in an industrial country, cannot be applied here, where the economy is still agricultural. So we have had to devise new methods of dividing the responsibilities for action, by levels, and we are doing this progressively, step by step, in advancing to socialism. I can tell you that there were periods when we went too quickly. There are always bound to be pluses and minuses. As for what you call the differences between north and south Vietnam, we do not find this to be a difficulty. We remain one nation; the attempts of the imperialist

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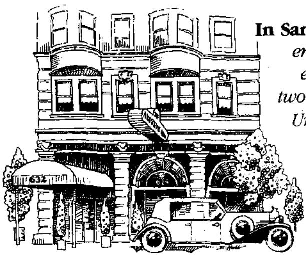

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and aggressive forces to destroy our unity failed. But you are quite right about the cast of mind being different in the north and the south, and we have given great attention to this. We have realized objectively that agricultural reform, for instance, has been going on for a long time in the north but is only beginning in the south. And that fruit orchards on peasant holdings are rare in the north, but in the south they are often very big and the income from them is considerable. We have decided not to worry about this, and to concern ourselves only with rice production. We may never tax these orchards, unless a landlord gets to be too rich. In industry as well as in agriculture, we are now giving a great deal of attention to offering people more incentives to produce. One of the contradictions we are facing is how to maintain a strong defense and build a strong economy simultaneously. We are trying to adjust to this as well, and we will do so. But, like everything else in a period of transition, it will take time."

The economic reforms that followed the nation's failure to meet any of the important agricultural and industrial targets of its first postwar five-year plan are based on a so-called contract system, which officially went into effect in 1981. Under this system, farmers individually or as a group agree with their coöperatives to produce specific amounts of grain— mostly rice—to be sold to the state at fixed prices. The quotas are based on the amount that each farmer produces, depending on how much land he has and on the fertility of his soil, which is considerably higher in most parts of the south than in the north. The state is supposed to provide seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and other essential needs, but because of shortages, especially of fertilizer, these requirements are seldom met in full. Whatever the farmer produces in excess of his quota he can either keep for his family, sell locally, sell to the state at fixed and profitable prices, or sell on the free market, for prices that vary according to the demand and the competition. The state would actually like to buy most of the surplus grain, to supply government workers, and especially workers in industry, who now also benefit from the incentive system, by being paid on the basis of how much they produce rather than how many hours they work, as before. The government sells the rice for far less than it pays for it. But, particularly in the south, farmers have

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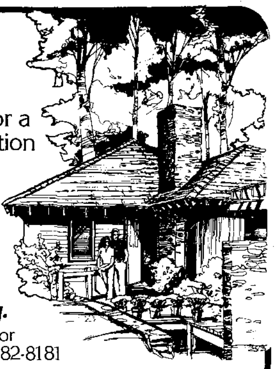

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sold less rice to the government because of a continuing shortage of the consumer goods that they want to buy with the proceeds. As a result, private merchants have reëmerged as a pivotal force, cornering large amounts of the surplus crops and supplying the farmers with the sought-after consumer goods. Most farmers in the south, two-thirds of whom still work individually, since they are not required to join coöperatives, prefer to deal on their own with the private traders. Not surprisingly, these "new capitalists" furnish the ideologues, who oppose the reforms, with their strongest ammunition.

When the contract system was first discussed, at the Sixth Plenum of the Fourth Party Congress, in 1979, Vietnam's food supplies were in perilously poor shape, having dropped about a quarter during the five-year-plan period then ending. In 1980, the year before the system was introduced, total grain production was approximately fourteen million tons—not enough to provide for a fast-rising postwar population of between fifty-six and fifty-seven million. Though the government's aim was to maintain the population increase at a rate of 1.7 per cent a year, it was growing at between 2.3 and 2.4 per cent. To make matters worse, farmers were quitting their land and looking for jobs in the city. The fish catch, meanwhile, had dropped by about forty per cent. (In Vietnam, meat, except for pork and poultry, has never been plentiful.) By 1982, the output of grain had risen to sixteen and a quarter million tons, and in 1983 it was just under seventeen million tons. The current long-range plan calls for an increase of a million tons a year, but last year drought and generally uneven weather caused a shortfall of several hundred thousand tons. Professor Tran Phuong, the Deputy Prime Minister for Planning and one of the few middle-generation trained economists in the Party hierarchy, with whom I spent several illuminating hours, told me, "By 1983, we had achieved self-sufficiency in food, but only by using the lowest allowable per-capita standard—eighteen hundred calories a day. In the past thirty-five years, our population has doubled, but the amount of cultivated land has not increased very much. Industry has increased only a little since 1975. Since 1979, when China turned against us, our defense burden has grown tremendously. So you can understand that while the achievements of the past few years are encouraging, we are still pursuing prewar goals, and we have a long way to go—I figure five years, until 1990—to rise above the level of bare self-sufficiency. We have also had severe distribution problems, largely because of the breakdown during the war of our transportation facilities. Immediately after the war, we actually had to send the south some of our imported rice—that had never happened before. In good prewar years, the south used to export sizable amounts of rice, but during the war it, too, was importing, and importing continued after 1975 in both parts of the country. But the situation is improving, and though the south now sends the north seven hundred thousand tons of rice a year, we're trying, through the contract system and other means, to correct the imbalance, and make the north self-sufficient, so the south can start exporting again."

Tran Phuong, a lively, open man whose mind moves swiftly and who speaks articulately about complicated subjects, seems likely to have a bright political future. As one of the leading voices for economic reform, he is a disciple of the Politburo member Vo Van Kiet, who is the head of the State Planning Commission. Kiet, a quiet southerner, prefers to stay in the background and spends much of his time in the provinces, where he feels most at home, and which he firmly believes are the testing ground of the future. He shuns formal events, such as the Independence Day ceremonies, and apparently has no strong political ambitions. Phuong, for his part, is more visible and more outspoken—he was one of the few people who, when I asked if Vietnam was not in many respects moving toward the Hungarian model of socialism, did not evade the question. He replied, "You are almost correct." What counts most at the moment is that Kiet and Phuong have won the support of Le Duan and Le Duc Tho, the senior Party leaders. The opposition ideologues are led by the Politburo member To Huu, who is in his early sixties and has been the leading candidate to succeed Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, although, with the trend toward reformism, Kiet is not now ruled out. Of the other Politburo members who are known to oppose the reforms, Truong Chinh, now in his mid-seventies, was one of Ho's earliest companions but does not now carry the personal clout he once

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did, though he does have his own men in key positions. Perhaps the most formidable of the conservatives is General Van Tien Dung, who has replaced General Vo Nguyen Giap as Defense Minister and the leading military man on the Politburo. General Dung has been vocal in stressing the continued need for a strong defense and in extolling his soldiers as national heroes who receive minimal economic benefits for their efforts; he, and his disciple General Le Duc Anh, who is running the Cambodian campaign, and is also on the Politburo, favor a strong, uncompromising line on Cambodia. Pham Hung, the remaining old-timer on the Politburo, is the nation's top security chief. A tough-minded southerner who directed the political campaign in the south during the war, he is considered a hard-liner less for ideological than for security reasons; if the prevailing political winds continue to moderate, he might move with them.

THE differences between the ideologues and the pragmatists, which cover the whole spectrum of political and economic matters and include foreign policy, have inevitably had an effect on the growth and discipline of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Created by Ho Chi Minh in 1930 as the Communist Party of Indo-China, the Party has traditionally maintained extremely rigorous standards, and cadres have always been selected and trained with the greatest care. Crises and Party upheavals have occurred periodically, but have been weathered and, for the most part, kept fairly quiet. The Party's membership today is approximately a million and three-quarters—not large in a country of nearly sixty million. In recent years, more changes than usual have occurred in the Party's structure and geographical distribution, owing partly to the problems and challenges of the postwar period, including those faced—particularly by younger cadremen—in dealing with the blandishments and temptations of corruption and the soft life in the south; and partly to the death of many first-generation heroes, and a certain amount of weeding out of older members of the Central Committee and of individuals who for one reason or another have fallen from favor. In the immediate postwar period, there was a lot of doubt about the loyalty and dedication of the southerners, and the southern leadership was still suffering from the severe wartime losses caused by the American-sponsored Phoenix program of assassination, specifically directed at the Vietcong underground and Party cadres. The doubt has by no means disappeared. Of the former leaders of the wartime Provisional Revolutionary Government in the south, or of the National Liberation Front, which preceded it, the number who now hold jobs of any significance in the national government is very small, and southern Party membership remains low in proportion to the population. Nevertheless, it is estimated that a third of the members of the current Central Committee, which has a total membership of a hundred and thirty, are southerners.

Over the past seven or eight years, according to Western observers who have followed Party matters, new members have averaged between seventy and eighty thousand a year, and about three-fifths of them are men with recent Army experience. This preponderance of military men, which is also reflected in the turnover of Central Committee members, takes on special significance in view of the fact that political commissars in the Army have been abolished. Moreover, the essentially conservative opinions on economics and politics which are held by military leaders at the top—particularly General Dung and the new Army chief of staff, General Le Trong Tan—carry a great deal of weight, over and above ideology. Interestingly, women make up less than twenty per cent of the Party membership—mainly because many women drop their Party work after they marry and have children. Though Vietnam is described in its constitution as "a dictatorship of the proletariat," workers make up only about ten per cent of the Party; the country, still overwhelmingly agricultural, has only three million industrial workers at most. To complicate the Party picture further, there is a considerable overlap at the local and regional level between the People's Committees, which are administrative bodies, and the Party Committees, which transmit policy guidelines from the top. In many cases, because there are not many tried and trusted members with enough experience, the same handful of people occupy positions on both committees simultaneously, or switch from one to the other. The lines between the Party and the government are thus blurred, but the Party ends up in the dominant position.

Congresses of the Vietnam Communist Party, which are major policy-making conclaves, are held every few years. Twice a year, plenum meetings of the Central Committee (numbered sequentially during the life of a congress) are summoned to hold debates and decide on the details of policies set forth by the congresses and by the Politburo, and the means of carrying them out. As for the Politburo, it meets whenever it chooses to—once or twice a month, on the average—and actually runs the country on a regular basis. After the new economic reforms were initially adopted, following a long debate in 1979, there remained a great deal of confusion and uncertainty about both planning and management, and particularly about the lines of authority between the central government and the lower echelons, in the provinces, districts, and major cities. As Hoang Tung explained it to me, "It became apparent that, in our effort to allow more dynamism and initiative at the lower levels while maintaining planning leadership at the center, we had let free-market practices get out of hand, and there were many examples of poor management. What the Sixth Plenum, of the Fifth Party Congress, in 1984, basically did was examine the experience of the previous four years, analyze what was right and what was wrong, and then correct and refine management practices. Essentially, the new Sixth Plenum consolidated the earlier Sixth Plenum (of the Fourth Party Congress) of 1979. It did not change the initiative given to local and provincial establishments, but it clarified and specified areas where policy was being misconstrued and misinterpreted by failure to abide by central guidelines. We had to decide, for example, what important agricultural and industrial products should be kept off the free market and be controlled by the state. And what other products the state would buy at fair prices but then distribute and sell on the free market. And we had to draw more definite lines for local and provincial groups about their fulfilling quotas, both in agriculture and in industry, before they could purchase raw materials for their own use in producing goods to sell domestically or to export."

It was not surprising that the system got out of hand in the early eighties in Ho Chi Minh City, for Saigon's new name had not changed its old ways of operating. Actually, it was Kiet who, A close-ratio 5-speed. Rack-and-pinion power steering. Power brakes. Radio with digital clock. Reclining bucket seats. And standard 5 year/50,000 mile Protection Plan.* *And, for a limited time, you could even get 8.8 annual percentage rate financing** See your Dodge Dealer about buying or leasing* a new Daytona. For just $8505† you could be dressed to thrill.*

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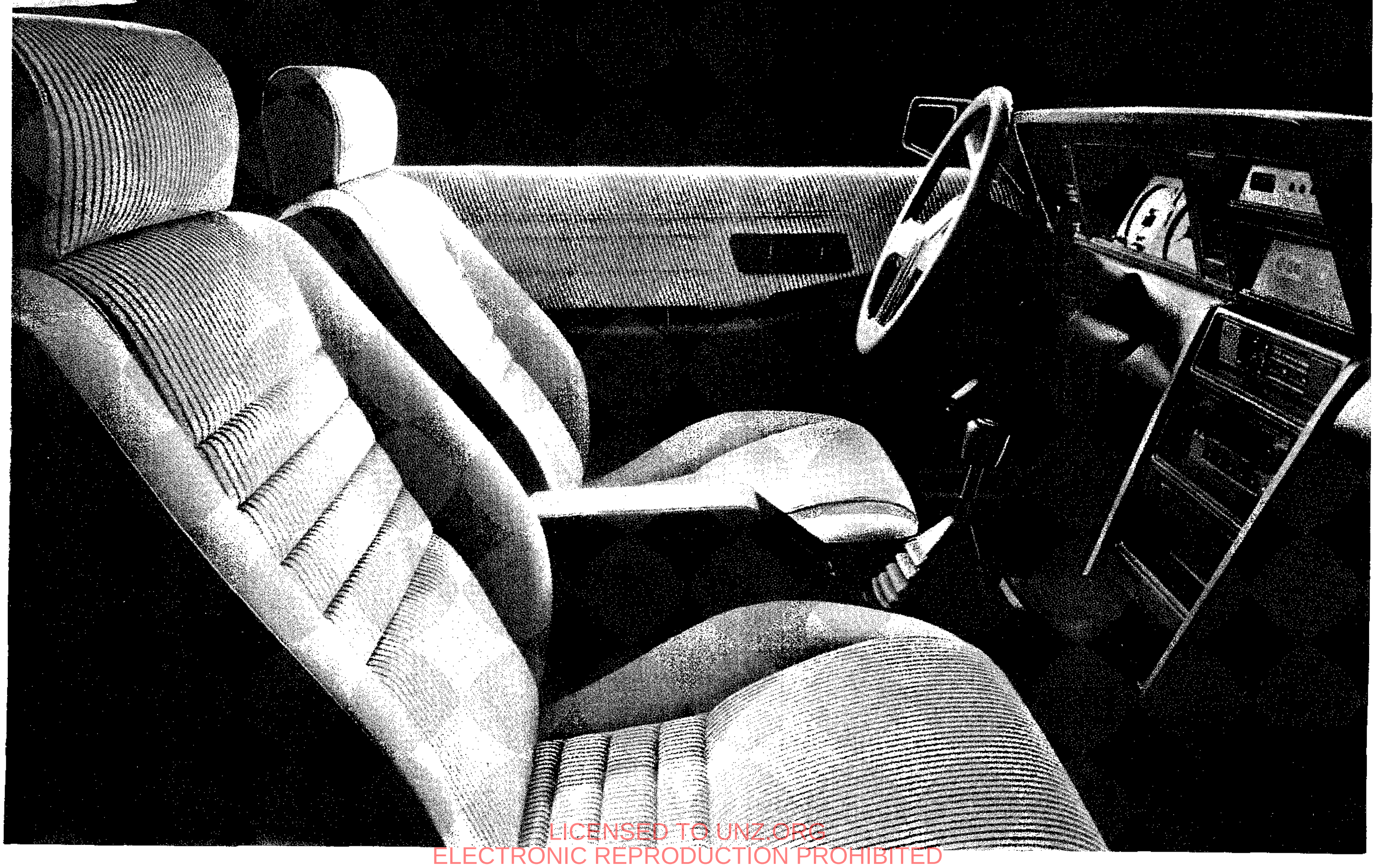

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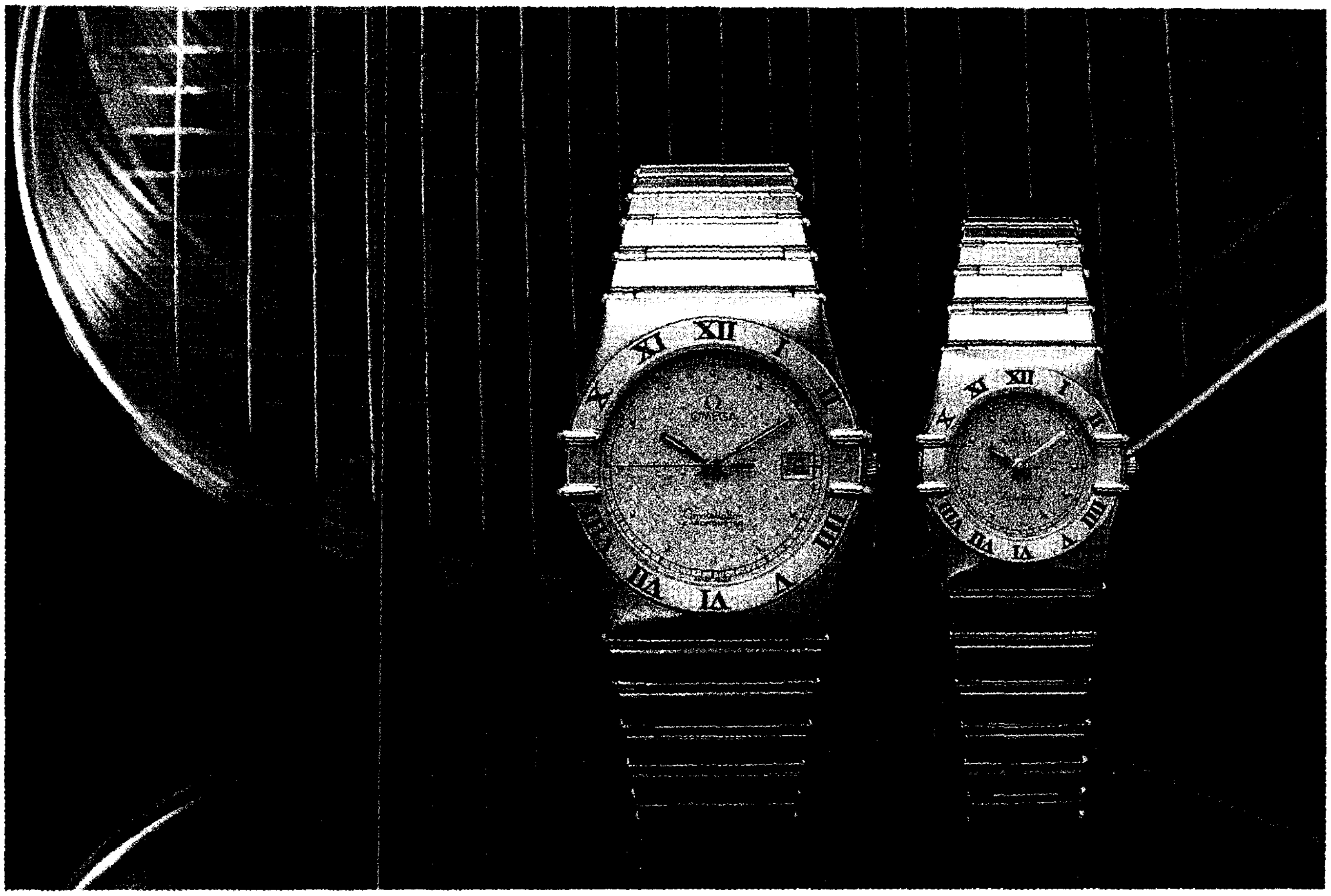

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as Party Secretary in the city in the late seventies, formulated and initiated policies that liberalized trade and commerce locally and paved the way for the 1980 national reforms, of which he was the prime instigator and author. Before the end of 1982, however, it was apparent that too much freedom and permissiveness had led to widespread chaos, not only in Ho Chi Minh City but in many southern provinces, which had set up their own export-import companies and were trading openly with other nations, most notably Singapore. In Ho Chi Minh City, according to a former Saigon official who, after a brief period in a "reëducation" camp at the end of the war, went to work for Kiet, applying Western-acquired knowledge as an economist to the new situation, there were seventeen separate companies, one for each district, and also five city-wide companies; an export-import firm called Cholemex, which was backed by the Chinese, had a capitalization of a billion dong, and a similar Vietnamese company had half that much. Starting from zero at the end of the war, an export-import trade of three hundred million dollars a year had been built up.

Following a meeting of the Politburo late in 1982, which was unusual in that it was held in Ho Chi Minh City, a government investigation was conducted during which all trading was suspended. A year later, Le Duan and Kiet attended a Party meeting of the Ho Chi Minh City municipal government. By that time, a single concern called the General Export & Import Company had been established to coördinate procurement, except that the seventeen district companies, and Cholemex, were permitted to resume supplying their own export commodities, such as shrimp, which went largely to Japan. Free-wheeling firms in the provinces also came under the supervision and control of the General Export & Import Company, and the unrestricted competition, which had been accompanied by considerable corruption, was diminished, if not entirely eliminated. Le Duan took much of the edge off the earlier criticism by praising city officials for their aggressive leadership and calling for Ho Chi Minh City to become an "export city." Vietnamese workers in agriculture and industry, he said, should devote a third of their time, or a hundred working days a year, to producing goods for export, and the goods should go to "nationalist, non-aligned, and independent" countries, capitalist as well as socialist. In a subsequent major speech, Le Duan startlingly declared that a worker's main motive, even when he was carrying out government policy, should be "personal interest," and—in what was a further obvious thrust at the ideologues—he dismissed egalitarianism as "an erroneous tendency alien to Marxism." He quoted Marx as also having said, "Once ideology is detached from interest, it will certainly disgrace itself."

THERE can thus be little doubt that the prevailing winds in Vietnam these days are moderate or reformist and that, at least for the present, the hard-liners are subdued. In my long conversation with Tran Phuong, he declared, echoing Le Duan, "Marx never said that only one kind of socialism must exist. As the author of scientific socialism, he said that it includes many categories of development. The question in Vietnam is: What proportion do we give to the private economy? I think that in ten years' time the private sector will still occupy an important position in the national economy. Its existence has a rationale, and it retains its importance. But what is equally important is that it should not occupy a leading position—that we don't allow the capitalists to control big companies." Tran Phuong and others who won't accept the concept of a mixed economy insist that while their definition of scientific socialism in Marxist terms may appear to embrace aspects of such an economy for the time being, particularly in respect to development in the south, this is basically an expedient and largely semantic formula, with no permanent conceptual validity. Phuong added, "It's our intention to have a long coexistence with the capitalists and technocrats in the south, where they are more numerous than in the north. We don't know how much they will develop in ten years' time. But by then their products won't be as good as the state products, even though they may live on as capitalists. In Eastern Europe, their output is often much better than state products, but it won't be that way here."

It is difficult to tell how much of this is wishful thinking and how much is predicated on Vietnam's acceptance of its failures to date and of the need to overhaul the foundations of its economy. It seems evident, however, that the change of course that began in the

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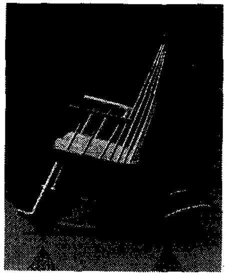

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early eighties was based on hardheaded appraisals and that the Vietnamese can be given credit for making and acting on those appraisals with less struggle and inner turmoil than was experienced either by the Russians or by the Chinese. Certainly the economy was in trouble and, despite some improvements, still is. Now that self-sufficiency in food has more or less been attained, the greatest shortages today are raw materials, energy, and money. Among other things, Vietnam will have to import more than a million tons of fertilizer a year until the phosphate plant destroyed in the 1979 war with China is once again able to function at full capacity. And restoring it requires other resources the country lacks. Though last year industrialization grew by fifteen per cent, construction of new factories has progressed slowly, because of the shortage of materials. There are now four new cement factories, producing more than a million tons a year, but that is not nearly enough; the five-year goal is for a fourfold increase. In both fertilizer and cement production, as well as in other industries, oil is needed, for which the Vietnamese are now totally dependent on the Russians; offshore oil deposits have been explored for many years, but further exploration and development have lagged, Tran Phuong told me, because the Russians lack the technology to go deep enough below the ocean floor.

Along with the shortage of oil, there is a dire need for electric power. Plans are under way to increase output many times over, but this will take from five to ten years. A huge hydroelectric power plant being built by the Russians at Hoa Binh, southwest of Hanoi on the Da River, is scheduled for completion in the early nineteen-nineties, and this in itself will provide a twofold increase—its ultimate capacity will be 8.8 billion kilowatt hours annually. The first two of eight generators won't be in operation until 1987, however, and no one really knows whether the Russians may run out of patience or money. Two other plants, with a combined capacity of seven hundred thousand kilowatt hours a year, are also planned—one of them in the south—but these will come later. And even when Hoa Binh is finished it cannot function without vast reconstruction of the country's run-down electricity-distribution grid, which dates back to French days, and the Russians insist that Vietnam will have to bear part of the cost. The

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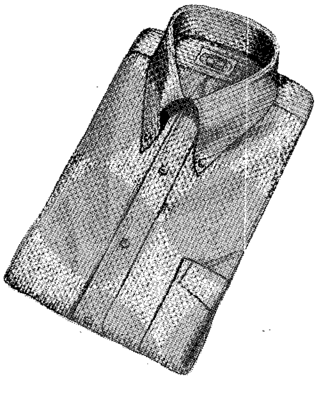

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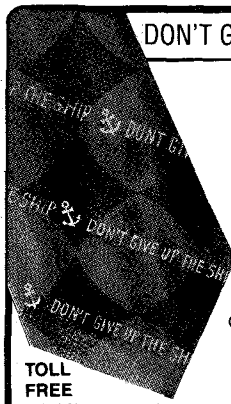

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Vietnamese hope that they will eventually be able to obtain aid for the reconstruction from the West, including the United States, which is still regarded as having an obligation to "heal the wounds of war," though the phrase is heard less often nowadays. Still another undeveloped energy source is coal; the country has large deposits, but only five or six million tons a year are being produced, and the goal is fifty million tons, including some for export. Electric power and coal are particularly necessary for the development of the chemical industry, and for the production of aluminum—there are large bauxite deposits in Vietnam—and for steel production; there is plentiful iron ore, too, but during the current five-year plan production fell way behind modest targets. Though the earlier overemphasis on heavy industry as an immediate priority has now been dropped, balanced industrialization is considered essential. So far, the country's experience with foreign-built factories has not been good. Russian and Eastern-bloc equipment is invariably outmoded. Sweden has donated close to a quarter-billion dollars to help build a modern pulp-and-paper mill, which, after ten years, is currently running at only a quarter of its projected annual capacity of fifty-five thousand tons, chiefly because the Vietnamese miscalculated their forestry reserves and chose to put the factory in a remote, isolated area north of Hanoi. There are some three hundred factories in and around Hanoi today, including fifty large ones, employing more than a thousand workers each, that are run by the state. They produce some machines and machine tools and engineering equipment, and, among other goods, textiles, chemicals, tires, porcelain, glassware, building materials, a wide variety of handicrafts, and processed foods. Pham Sy Lien, the first vice-president of Hanoi's executive committee, told me, "Our biggest achievement of the past thirty years is that, especially since the war, this has become an industrialized city instead of a consumers' city." To a visitor, however, the city still seems pretty much of a quiet capital, with more of a rustic than an industrial air.

If the Vietnamese could afford it, they would import enough raw materials and spare parts to run their light industries at seventy per cent of capacity instead of the current fifty per cent or less, and this would not only provide more of the consumer goods they need so badly but also enable them to produce more for export. Exports, mainly of seafood, handicrafts, and footwear, have been growing over the past few years, according to the International Monetary Fund, but are still more than fifty per cent below target. Last year, according to preliminary I.M.F. estimates, the value of the nation's exports was seven hundred and forty-three million dollars. Vietnam rescheduled part of its debts to hard-currency countries—Japan, Libya, and Iraq among them—and had to use two hundred million to pay for debt servicing of other outstanding dollar obligations. Its total debt—principal and interest—to hard-currency nations comes to about two billion dollars, and it owes the Socialist bloc the equivalent of four billion in soft currencies. Foreign-exchange reserves at the end of 1984 stood at a paltry sixteen million dollars—enough for a fortnight's basic purchases. The current budget deficit is about fifteen per cent. Tax collections have improved somewhat. Farmers are taxed at an average of eight per cent of their annual rice production; less fertile paddy land is assessed at four per cent; and other crops are not taxed at all. In industry, small entrepreneurs and workshops operating coöperatively or privately are taxed at ten or fifteen per cent of income; but such establishments as restaurants, not considered necessary, pay as much as seventy per cent. (That's why so many of the restaurants have gone out of business.) There are no personal income taxes, partly because wages are so low (studies are under way to determine how much to increase wages in relation to the value of the dong, whose low official rate of about eleven to the dollar is generally acknowledged to be way out of line with reality) and partly because there is so much moonlighting in the country that it would be impossible to find out who was making what. In the past two years, a new program to raise funds from the sale of Fatherland Construction bonds, which can be bought either with cash or with rice, has had moderate success, and a government-run lottery has done better, for the Vietnamese, like the Chinese, are born gamblers.

However the basic economy develops in the next few years, Tran Phuong and others emphasize that the country's best hope over that span is to build up its agro-industrial base. The

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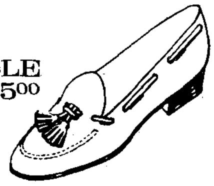

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major product and biggest potential earner of export income is rubber. In prewar years, in South Vietnam, where most of the rubber plantations are situated, a hundred and forty thousand hectares, or three hundred and forty-six thousand acres, were devoted to rubber. Nearly all these plantations were destroyed by bombing or defoliation, or by being allowed to become run-down, but the level of land in use is now back to a hundred thousand hectares; the five-year goal is to double that, and the long-range goal is to reach eight hundred thousand or a million hectares by the year 2000, and to extend the plantations into central Vietnam and perhaps to a few areas of the north, too. In many of the so-called New Economic Zones, to which a million and a half people have been relocated, chiefly from Ho Chi Minh City and other overpopulated places, plantations have been developed on what used to be nonarable land, often in remote and unprepossessing regions. Food processing, including both canning and freezing, is another industry that can be developed for export income. Large tea and coffee plantations that were destroyed in the war by defoliation are slowly being restored, and jute and cassava are other potential exports.

It remains to be seen whether the new incentive schemes and a moderate program of industrial development will provide the stimuli for Vietnam to make significant economic progress by 1990. The decisions at the top in the Politburo have been made and the formulas prescribed, but one Western diplomat who knows the country well told me, "The Vietnamese have improved their organization and lines of command, and they're trying to manage things better, but it's still all cast in terms of Confucian exhortation. In this sense, they're as orthodox as ever. What you have is the old Soviet framework—the Dnepropetrovsk dam idea, reflected in big projects like the one at Hoa Binh—imposed upon a society that remains overwhelmingly peasant and backward. It's odd how an innate pragmatism, or peasant common sense, can overcome ideology in some respects, as with the agricultural reforms, and yet how the Vietnamese can stay firmly cast in the old mold at the same time. There are certain things they are reluctant to, or refuse to, get involved with. Family planning is one. They pay lip service to it, but they haven't mounted a real campaign, a determined effort, to come to grips with the problem, even though they're being given help by the United Nations. The leadership here hasn't done what the Chinese have done, despite the Confucian tradition in China being, if anything, stronger—hasn't provided the discipline for family planning, which means direct interference at the family level to persuade people to have one or two children instead of three or four or five, and to impose penalties if need be. And this remains a very serious matter, which increasing agricultural production probably can't cope with over the long run. It could keep the Vietnamese on a knife edge economically."

For the leadership, advocacy of birth control has a certain irony about it. Ho Chi Minh, who never married, loved children—he referred to all Vietnamese as "my children," and they, of course, revered him as Uncle Ho. Whenever he met with a group of young men or women, he would give them two admonitions: "Don't smoke, and don't stay single." The Ho myth lives on, as strong as ever, though whether it will continue through future generations is hard to tell. Certainly the few remaining Vietnamese leaders of Ho's generation, like Pham Van Dong, and their immediate potential successors, like Tran Phuong, are making every effort to carry on the myth, because it is such a vital part of the Vietnamese past, of the heavy mixture of lore and legend and revolutionary adventure which underlies the nation's emotional and political history, and has inspired and motivated its citizens for four decades.

The impact of Ho is felt and seen everywhere in Hanoi but most strongly at his tomb, a huge, columned structure on one side of a spacious and beautifully landscaped square fronting the national Parliament and Party headquarters. The tomb is a striking black-and-gray granite building—the stone came from quarries all over the country—which was not completed until August, 1975, six years after Ho's death. Some fifteen thousand people visit it each week. I went there late one Sunday morning, when long lines, including many schoolchildren, stretched around the block, waiting to pass slowly up the granite steps of the tomb, past the engraved quotation from Ho which one sees everywhere—"Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom"—and then up a short flight of stairs and around a small chamber where, constantly

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guarded by four armed soldiers at attention, Ho's small embalmed body lies on a raised platform. His arms are folded across his stomach, and his expression is grave and peaceful. His famous wispy goatee looks wispier than ever. The crowds—the children especially—are sombre and obviously awed at the sight. Once outside again, the young ones resume their chatter and play.

As I walked out of the tomb into hot, glaring sunlight, I thought of the irony of Vietnam's birth-control problems, and reflected that Ho would have appreciated it. Unfortunately, I never met him, but I have spoken with many scholars and others who knew him, including some of his closest Vietnamese associates, and I have read a good deal about his life. Being a highly practical and often calculating and devious man as well as a sentimental one, he would, I believe, have tempered his love for children with an awareness of the serious problem presented by Vietnam's too rapidly growing population. If he were alive today, or even if he had lived through the years just after the war, he would surely have been the first to go out into the countryside and talk to the peasants about birth control, and what to do about it; he would have done this graphically, and, as he did with so many things, dramatized the issue with whimsical humor. Although he passed through several stages of orthodox Bolshevik and Communist ideology, in France, in the Soviet Union, and in other Southeast Asian nations as well as in Vietnam when he was the chief Comintern agent in the area in the thirties, he always encouraged new ideas and anticipated new situations. For that reason, he would probably have also sought the liberal economic reforms that are now being introduced. My guess is that he would have done this sooner rather than later, too, and would have done his utmost to avoid or ameliorate some of the other postwar problems that have beset Vietnam, including the cleavages that still exist between the north and the south. He would, for example, have done what his comrades would never allow him to do during the war because of his fragility and for reasons of security: visit the south, and travel the country from its southernmost tip, on the Gulf of Siam, to its farthest northern reaches, in the mountains overlooking China.

—ROBERT SHAPLEN

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

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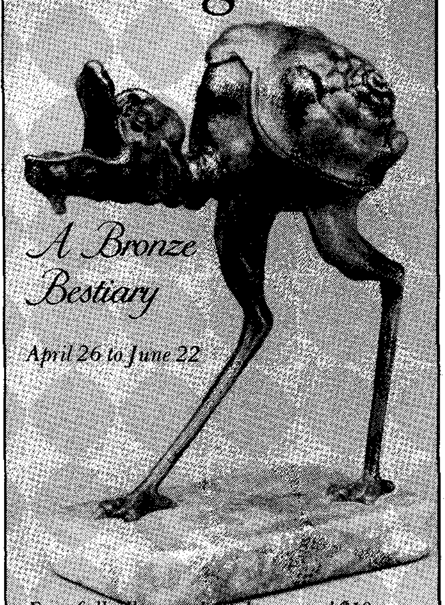

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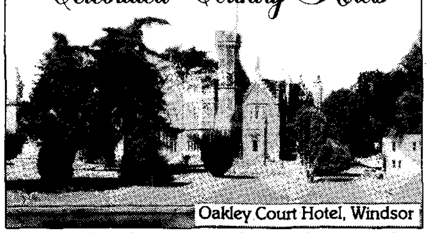

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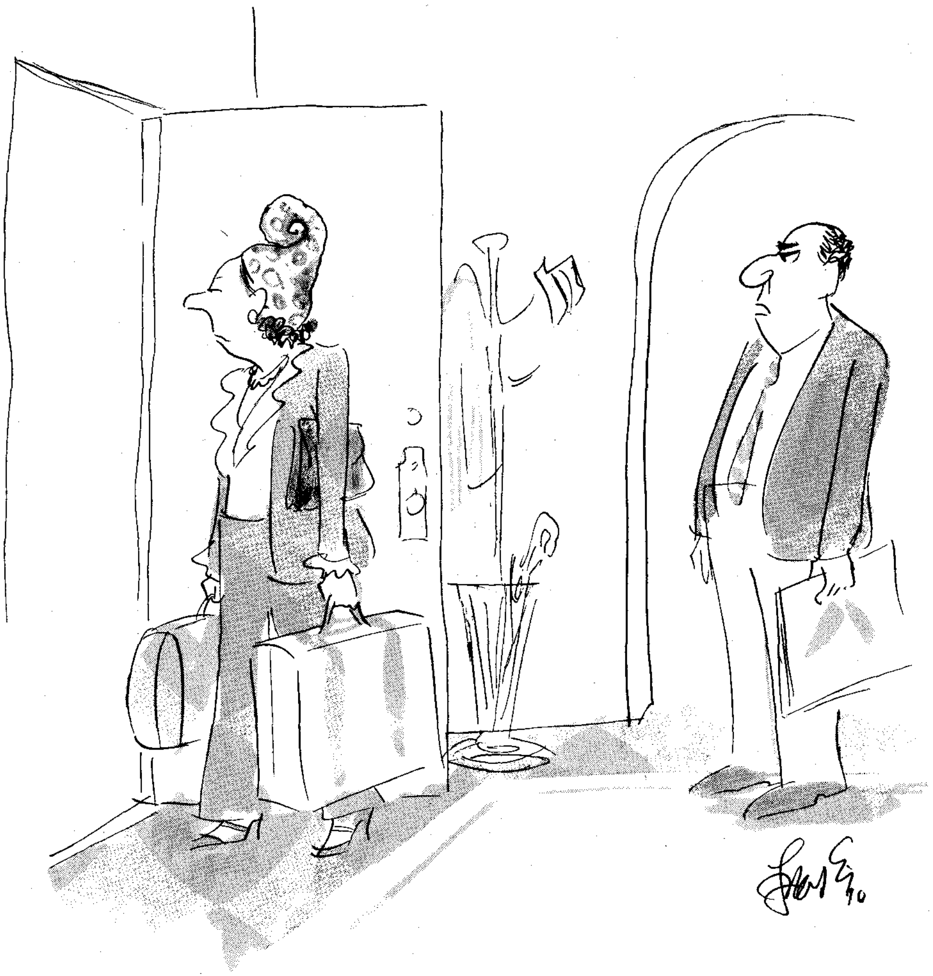
THE THEATRE

À la Recherche Do Wah Diddy

IT becomes increasingly clear to me that a number of events took place in the early nineteen-sixties which I failed to make myself aware of; in some cases the degree of chagrin I feel over this failure may be described as infinitesimal. For example, up to last week I had never heard of a songwriter named Ellie Greenwich, who in the years just before the Beatles arrived on our shores appears to have been a much worshipped figure in the world of popular music. She has been called "the den mother of the girl-group sound," whatever *that* may mean, and it is certainly a historical fact that she and her then husband and collaborator, Jeff Barry, wrote such classics of the period as "Da Doo Ron Ron," "Be My Baby," "Hanky Panky," and "Do Wah Diddy." Miss Greenwich's vogue faded, but there were many who remembered her and the place that her tender illiteracies had occupied in their teen-age dreams. Last year, at the Bottom Line, a cabaret performance of Greenwich songs, assembled by Melanie Mintz, proved unexpectedly popular; some producers, with the inveterate optimism of their kind, decided to turn the cabaret into a full-fledged Broadway musical, and here it is at the Ambassador, bearing the name of one of the biggest of the Greenwich-Barry hits, "Leader of the Pack," and starring Miss Greenwich herself, in what the program states is her first appearance on any stage since she played in a college production of "The Pajama Game."

Many hands have tinkered with Miss Mintz's original notion, but they have been unable to bring it up to the not very lofty standard of a Broadway musical; rather, it consists of an incoherent succession of twenty-four songs, deafeningly amplified and often accompanied by dances too strenuous for their own good. Instead of a book we have what are called "liner notes," by Anne Beatts, which amount to a sketch, in flimsy, soap-opera form, of Miss Greenwich's life, from her growing up in Levittown to her marriage, her happy songwriting days in the Brill Building, her divorce, and her long retirement. The climax of the show, which lasts eighty minutes and is played without an intermission, is the sudden, supposedly unlooked-for appearance of Miss Greenwich—a pleasant-looking blond woman in early middle age, who waves to the audience as if to old friends gathered for a country picnic but who has little of a professional nature to offer us.



"And I never did like that hat."

Heading the large cast are Dinah Manoff, Patrick Cassidy, Dennis Bailey, Annie Golden, and Darlene Love. The director and choreographer is Michael Peters, the designer of the set is Tony Walton, the designer of the costumes is Robert de Mora, and the designer of the lighting is Pamela Cooper.

TO speak with charity of the not very lofty standard of a Broadway musical and then to be confronted by the pygmy diminutiveness of "Take Me Along," which closed after opening night, was a dismaying experience. The Kennedy Center and the Goodspeed Opera House, which specializes in the exhumation of corpses, joined forces to bring to town a revival of a show that was moribund when it opened here a quarter of a century ago and in its present cheap and unsavory production was an embarrassment to cast and audience alike. Based on O'Neill's "Ah, Wilderness!," an agreeable comedy about small-town life in Connecticut at the turn of the century, "Take Me Along" amounts to a caricature of O'Neill's for once quite sunny intentions. (He was writing about a family not his own, and that seems to have given a momentary reprieve to his usual literary misanthropy.) Figures in the caricature include a kindly middle-aged newspaper editor; his drunken, unemployable brother-in-law; his tiresome, dutiful wife; his skittishly virtuous old-maid sister; his foppish elder son, an undergraduate at Yale; and a younger son, who is engaged in squeezing the last drop of pleasurable anguish from the ignominy of a much delayed adolescence. Among the downright creepy songs they sing, either alone or jointly, are "I Would Die," "Staying Young," "If Jesus Don't Love Ya," and "In the Company of Men," the last being a painfully dated paean to male bonding. To the members of the

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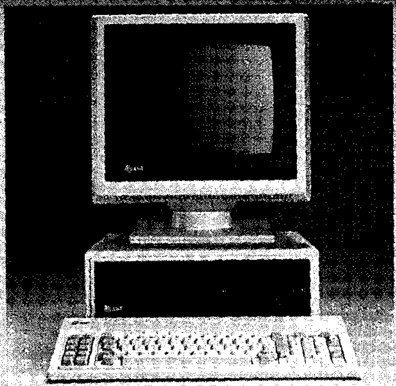

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cast who were making their Broadway débuts in this work, better luck next time. The gimcrack scenery was by James Leonard Joy, the costumes were by David Toser, the lighting was by Craig Miller, and the direction was by Thomas Gruenewald.

By an instructive coincidence, in the very week of "Leader of the Pack" and "Take Me Along," the new musical "Grind" came to the Mark Hellinger—a show that *does* attempt to raise our present sorry standard, and that, if it doesn't succeed as a whole, never fails to hold our interest from one stirring scene to the next. It is a welcomely ambitious work, superbly produced and superbly acted, and it falters by dint of seeking to accomplish too much inside a deliberately narrow framework. The setting is a burlesque house in Chicago in the dark year of 1933, and the author of the book (Fay Kanin), the composer of the music (Larry Grossman), and the writer of the lyrics (Ellen Fitzhugh) are far from being content to give us the customary view of backstage life, with its tawdry vigor, its personal rivalries, its economic hardships; we are also to have spelled out for us the miserable consequences of the segregation practiced in the theatre at that time and the bigotries that the enforced intimacies of poverty served to heighten rather than diminish. They have it in mind, as well, to tell us many sad things about failing in one's career, about growing old, about the loneliness of immigrant Irish rebels, and about the false dawn heralded by the Century of Progress exposition held in Chicago that year. They cannot bear to omit even so trifling a footnote to history as the celebrated fan-dancer Sally Rand, who was thought by many pious folk at the time to portend the downfall of Western civilization. All this is more than a couple of hours can hope to contain, even under the energetic and inventive direction of Harold Prince.

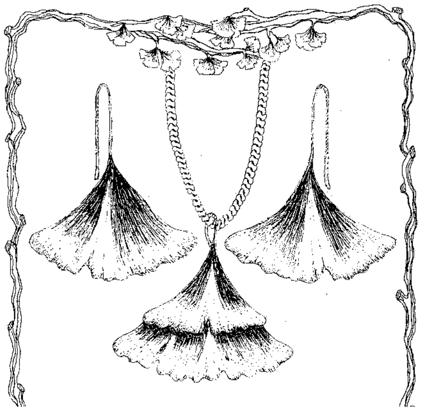
Ben Vereen is one of the most attractive performers alive, and he is at the top of his bent in "Grind." Supporting him and making something strong and touching out of their smaller roles are Leilani Jones, Timothy Nolen, and Stubby Kaye, who earned an early immortality playing Nicely-Nicely in "Guys and Dolls." The marvellous set, which is almost a show in itself, is by Clarke Dunham, the racy costumes are by Florence Klotz, and the immaculate lighting is by Ken Billington. The choreography, by Lester Wilson, is of a higher order than any to be encountered in the burlesque houses known to my generation. I note this in praise, not censure. —Brendan Gill

OFF BROADWAY

An Enemy of Stature

NOTHING but praise for the Roundabout's production of "An Enemy of the People," starring Roy Dotrice. As co-translated (with Anna Bamborough) and directed by Frank Hauser, it is clear, strong, and untouched by worthiness. No opportunity for humor—Ibsen's humor, which is considerable—has been overlooked. It would be hard to imagine a more exuberant, self-deluding, self-winding, or funnier Dr. Stockmann than Mr. Dotrice—a Stockmann whose occasional foolishness never takes the edge off his passionate convictions or his nobility of character. A better foil for the Doctor than Paul Sparer's craven, dyspeptic Mayor Stockmann cannot be imagined, either. As the two brothers, the two actors play as if they had been born to their roles. Mr. Dotrice, being the dramatist's spokesman, has an extra burden, and he assumes it gallantly. In Act IV, when Dr. Stockmann addresses the jeering townspeople and compares the corruption of the cowardly politicians to the poison in the town's baths, all his naïveté—expecting thanks, he is momentarily crestfallen by rejection—drops away, and he becomes a courageous man of stature, no less so in defeat. The supporting cast does well; among its members I especially admired Ruby Holbrook, as the Doctor's staunch wife; Janet Zarish, as their daughter; and DeVeren Bookwalter, as a brave sea captain. The admirable settings, costumes, and lighting are by Bob Mitchell, A. Christina Giannini, and Dennis Parichy, respectively.

"September in the Rain," by the English dramatist John Godber, at Hudson Guild, is a modest, gentle play that tells the story of a marriage. A Yorkshire coal miner named Jack and his wife, Liz, go year after year to Blackpool for their summer holiday, to breathe the sea air and sit on the beach and squabble and make up and enjoy themselves. The action, which covers about thirty years, takes place on a bare stage, with a few straight chairs, two beach chairs, and a bridge table for scenery. (How strong a bare stage



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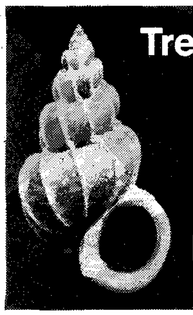
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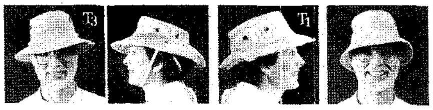
and a minimum of props can be!) It is Liz who does most of the talking—chattering, really—sometimes directly to the audience, and sometimes to her husband, to urge him to gestures of affection or to calm his sudden bursts of anger. We see them at home, suitcases packed, and then in a car, stuck in traffic, on their first trip. At dinner in a Blackpool boarding house, they share a table with another (invisible) couple—the man is a sewer worker, and well supplied with hair-raising anecdotes. There follow days on the beach, in bright sunshine and teeming rain, and a fight, when Liz wonders if the marriage was a mistake. There is an evening at a performance of "The Student Prince," during which Jack gives Liz advance news of every scene, then bursts into sobs, to her intense embarrassment. And the years pass. At last, we see them buttoned into sweaters, reminiscing and holding hands.

Mr. Godber's play is sympathetic yet free of sentimentality—free, too, of the push-button bitterness so often present in British plays about the working class. And when it is over a whole way of life has opened up. The lines are spare, without any folksiness or rhetorical flourishes, and they sound exactly right when spoken by two capable actors (Susan Greenhill and Steve Ryan), who are Americans. What is also exactly right is the cheap, pretty print dress that Miss Greenhill wears throughout; the costumes are by Mary L. Hayes. The eloquent lighting is by Phil Monat. Direction by David Kerry Heefner, the producing director of Hudson Guild.

THE Young Playwrights Festival, an annual treat, opened last week at Playwrights Horizons. Of the four plays, all but one of them by beginners, all but that same one would, it seemed to me, have been better served by staged readings than by the sometimes distracting full productions. Enough carping. In "Field Day," the humorous, spooky opener, by Leslie Kaufman (age seventeen when the play was submitted), a pair of soldiers in some future nuclear war are parachuted into a minefield in enemy territory. The two are a hardheaded, clear-eyed city man and a sentimental, softheaded country man; the words they speak are amusing, and the roles are well acted by Stephen Ahern and Robert Joy, under Don Scardino's direction. "Sonata," by Elizabeth Hirschhorn (age fifteen at submission), is about a little girl who disappears, and the effects of



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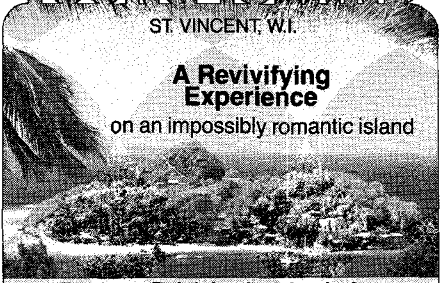
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her disappearance or her parents, a detective assigned to the case, and a pair of small children, who act as a kind of mocking chorus. The script is elaborate, as both written and presented, and is pervaded by a disquieting shrewdness and a not very convincing cynicism. Again, the performances are good—especially those of John Martinuzzi, as the girl's father, and Robin Groves, as her mother. Shelly Raffle directed. "True to Life," by Marc Ratliff (age eighteen at submission), is set in a saloon in South Dakota. A young man who hopes to become a photographer, and whose father has recently died of drink, is there with his boozy uncle. Melancholy and unsure of himself, he speaks to the proprietor and a waitress about his father, his future, and the demands of art. The waitress (Lucinda Jenney) mysteriously dances a lot, and very well. Steve Flynn is the young man. Ben Levitt directed.

"The Ground Zero Club" is by Charlie Schulman, who was eighteen at the time the play was submitted, and is not a beginner; an earlier play of his was done at the 1983 festival. The new one is full-fledged and very funny—an original comedy that stands up well to its lively production, under John Ferraro's direction, and is ready to move on to other theatres at any time. The setting is the observation deck of the Empire State Building, where an assortment of people, with an assortment of attitudes, wait for an announced atomic bombing. The play is like a witty, satiric revue sketch in the day of witty, satiric revues, and the characters are very well observed and created, and very well played. Among the more memorable performances are those of Larry Joshua and Elizabeth Berridge, as a punk rocker and his girlfriend; beautiful Polly Draper (in gold lamé from stem to stern) as a café-society belle; Bill Schoppert as her husband; Lucinda Jenney as a "No Nukes" type, with a trayful of heartfelt buttons; and Thomas Ikeda as a silent Japanese tourist. The sets and costumes for all four plays were designed by Loren Sherman and Jennifer von Mayrhauser, respectively.

—EDITH OLIVER

●

Accompanied by crisp sugar snap peas, carrots and a baked potato—alas, soggy and old—I would return for the mutton without hesitation whenever the red meat craving strikes.—*Bryan Miller in the Times.*

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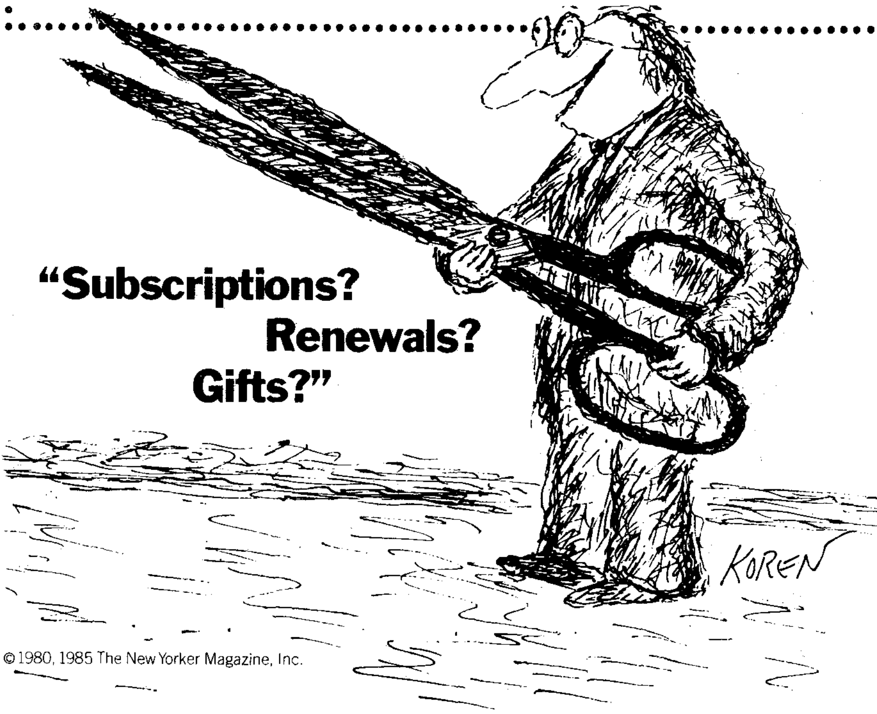
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

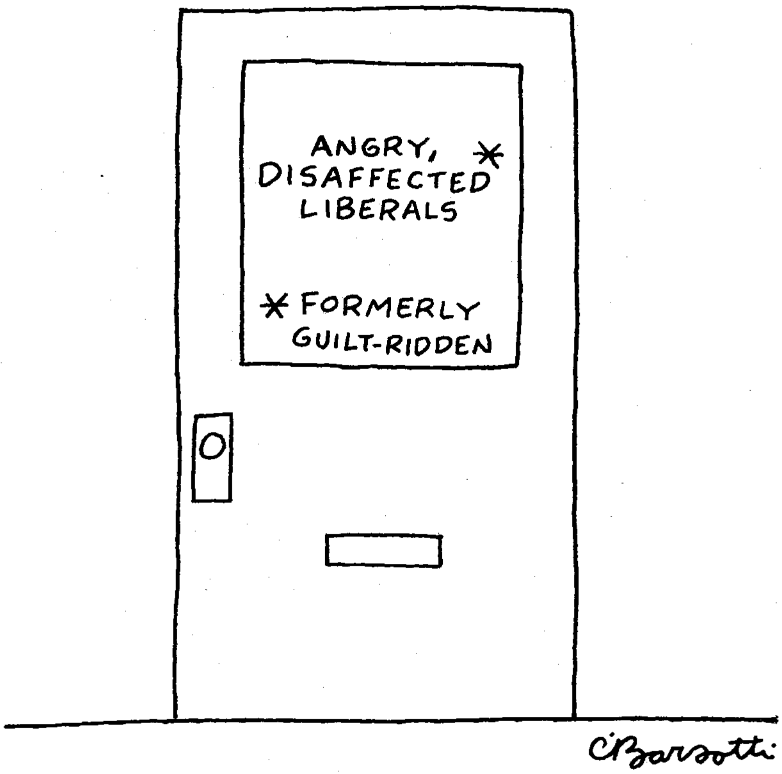
Passion

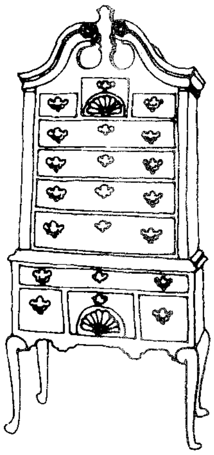
ELI (Nick Mancuso) and Blue (Peter Coyote), the two central characters in "Heartbreakers," are inseparable friends, and it's easy to perceive their longtime affection for each other. It's in the half looks they exchange; it's in the way they move down the street together, and in the things they take for granted. The movie is about what's underneath their buddy relationship: their competitiveness, their jealousy of each other, their resentments—all the unresolved feelings that go into making them rivals. Women are their battlefield. The darkly handsome Eli takes over his father's business (a women's-apparel factory), and he lives in a swank little house, drives a neat car, and isn't short of funds, so maybe there's a natural balance in the fact that the women he likes are attracted to Blue, a driven, unsuccessful painter, always broke.

Bobby Roth wrote and directed this low-budget feature (his fourth), and it was photographed on locations in his home town, Los Angeles, by the Berlin-born cinematographer Michael Ballhaus, whose wide-ranging credits include seventeen Fassbinder films. When Eli and Blue are hanging out at places like Fatburger or the gym The Sports Connection, they fit right in. Both in their mid-thirties, they're like hip American versions of the men in Bertrand Blier's "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs;" they're attractive to women and they have no trouble making out, but women mystify them. At the beginning of the movie, Blue realizes that Cyd (Kathryn Harrold), who has been living with him for five years in a loft with few of the amenities—it doesn't even have a real bed—is "slipping away" from him. She wants something more substantial than his idea of an artist's life; she complains that when he's painting he forgets all about her. Blue is sick at the thought of losing her, and he expresses his anxieties to Eli. But all he says to Cyd is "If you're not happy, leave," and despite her feelings for him she takes up with the attentive, dependable Chuck King (Max Gail), an abstractionist who sells and isn't as passionately involved in his work as Blue. (The paintings in this movie seem exactly right: King's patterned canvases look like Blue's description of them as wallpaper. If Blue were more generous, he might call them agreeable, workmanlike wallpaper.) Cyd's leaving Blue precipitates the events of the movie. Desperate to win her back, he tries to pull his life together. He quits his crummy job at a printshop—he tells the boss he can't stand printing porno stuff anymore. And then he talks a gallery owner into giving him a show by capitalizing on his (somewhat embarrassed) attraction to fetishes: he produces a series of high-camp Pop paintings—porny pin-ups that feature a dominatrix, Candy (the late Carol Wayne), decked out in a wig, high heels, garter belts, merry widows, and leather.

Meanwhile, Eli, who is shorter and more muscular than Blue, and looks younger and healthier, loses his father, takes on heavier business responsibilities, and, after years of doing well with women but feeling empty because they don't mean more to him than casual sex, spots the girl he thinks is *the* girl. Liliane (played by Carole Laure, the willowy French-Canadian actress who was the pivotal figure in the Blier film) is an assistant at the gallery where Blue is to have his show, but her principal occupation appears to be doing calisthenics, aerobics, and dance movements. (The results seem worth every bit of the compulsive effort.) When Liliane isn't working out, she's wiggling like an exotic temptress, with her long dark hair sheathing her snaky body. Carole Laure suggests a haunted, feverish sensuality, and she gets by with all of Liliane's sultry squirminess, even when the editing doesn't protect her and she's seen rolling her eyes like a latter-day Tondelayo (the sexy savage of "White Cargo" who drove men wild with lust). The key difference between Liliane and Tondelayo is that Liliane fancies herself a feminist. Her idea of controlling her life is to have sex with Eli in his car but refuse to go to bed with him; she's like a soulful dominatrix, and she keeps him spinning.

Roth doesn't quite sustain the Eli-and-Blue parallel-lives construction; he seems more involved with Blue—maybe because he dealt with a character in Eli's situation in his film "The Boss' Son." And there could be another reason. In photographs, Roth looks like a cross between Coyote's Blue and Mancuso's Eli, and in an interview with the *Times* he said that the two characters "were actually two sides of myself—the political artist side and the businessman-Jewish-son side—and they were based on composites of all my male friends." But he must have identified much more strongly with the artist side; the film couldn't be so full of tension and temperament if he hadn't. Roth has an intuitive feeling for movement—movement that appears natural yet is heightened. The picture doesn't look as if it had been photographed in separate shots; the movement seems fluid, continuous. There's always something going on between Mancuso and Coyote; they're a good team, even though Mancuso on his own is a dark, polite blank—Heathcliff out to lunch.





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He suggests a generic businessman-son, with no specifics and little personality—just a faint disaffection. (Eli is smooth-faced and withdrawn even in the hospital scene where his dying father—played by George Morfogen, who's a fine physical matchup—expresses contempt for him.)

Sometimes the characters open their mouths and what comes out isn't dialogue—it doesn't deepen the scene or move it along. And sometimes the characters simply don't have enough to say, and the scenes feel muffled or hollow, as if the director wasn't quite sure what he was getting at—as if he was hoping for a revelation. (Roth may need to work with a writer.) "Heartbreakers" engages a viewer, but it doesn't hold together in the memory, because it's all moods and moments, and much of the emotion swirling about is inchoate—for example, Liliane's weeping after sex, and even in the wonderful scene where Eli asks Blue to dance with Liliane so he can watch and torment himself. It's a mood-poem movie. (At times, it's like a more realistic Alan Rudolph film; at other times it's a little like one of Cassavetes' drunken-buddy pictures.) And the mood is basically set by Peter Coyote. He's more open to the camera than anyone else; his face and body say more. Mancuso's handsomeness is like a mask, but Coyote, who often looks ravaged, meets the other actors more than halfway. The women's attraction to him is convincing; their subsequent anger, disappointment, and depression are convincing, too.

Blue wants women to be around when he takes a break from his work; he doesn't want to be bothered when he's working. He expects the women he likes to be far more independent than they are—he is surprised to discover that he can't deal with them on his terms without hurting them. (The saddest is Candy, the hooker-model with the whips, who's a sweet, maternal pussycat.) The movie catches the confusion in the relations of the sexes without sentimentalizing that confusion. (Blue's name is the film's most sentimental touch, and it can be partly explained by the fact that his paintings are actually the work of the artist Robert Blue.) What binds the two guys is their bewilderment about women. They seem to blame each other for a good measure of their emotional frustration (and their rage erupts when they play racquetball).

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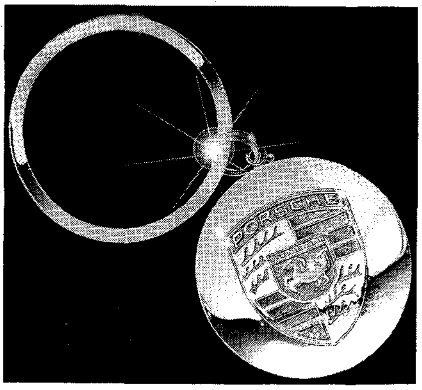

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likable, yet they're screwed-up and, from the men's point of view, utterly impossible. The women don't want the guys to be overprotective or to treat them as helpless, yet they expect to be taken care of. The men don't know which signals to follow, and the women don't know which signals they're sending out, because their feelings are contradictory. They want to be respected as modern, independent women, and they want to be cuddled like little girls. Courting Liliane, Eli keeps trying to tune in to whatever frequency she's operating on, but he never finds it. Blue can't believe that Cyd, who acknowledges that she loves him, will stay on with Chuck King. There's nothing dirty or spiteful or anti-woman in Roth's approach; it simply recognizes how insane all this is.

"Heartbreakers" deals with sex in a matter-of-fact way and in an American idiom—in our body language, with our shorthand, and in our lofts and apartments. The characters are frazzled in ways we recognize. Coyote's Blue looks like the kind of guy who has tended his boyishness over the years; he has the not-quite-grownup American look—an anguished boyishness. And when his sold-out show and his unaccustomed solvency don't bring Cyd back, his face takes on new expressions of uncertainty and pain. Blue's capacity for unconcealed suffering is what makes him Roth's hero. At the opening of the movie, when Blue is afraid he's losing Cyd, he goes to Eli's place to talk to him, and Eli and his date (Jamie Rose), who are giddy and charged up and just about to have sex, forget about it and take him out to comfort him. He really cares about Cyd, and that's more emotionally involving for them than the flirty relationship they were engaged in.

It's Blue's depth of emotion—what Eli calls his "passion"—that Eli can never forgive him for. It's what, in the framework of this movie, distinguishes the artist from the businessman. There's an undeniable element of fanciness in the conception, and I wish the movie weren't awed by Blue. Are his glossy pinups an expression of his passion? Or of something lesser—a callow obsession, perhaps, or even a way of taking revenge on Cyd? There's an element of revenge in Blue's becoming successful—he's showing her what she passed up. (Generally, the kind of close relationship between men that "Heartbreakers" is about doesn't last after one of them marries, and this might suggest that Blue isn't as serious about Cyd as he wants to believe he is.) Roth doesn't go deep enough, but he succeeds in using the two men as a way into the American culture of sex, circa the mid-eighties, and he captures something of West Coast bohemianism. He characterizes everyone; people who nod at Eli or Blue in a breakfast spot turn up again, and you begin to get a sense of them as the regulars in the places Eli and Blue go to. Blue has no illusions about the kind of gallery he's showing at; it's the hot gallery of the moment, run by a dealer (James Laurenson) who takes sixty per cent. But this dealer knows what he's up to, and he's as happy as a baby boy when he puts over an unknown like Blue. He prances in triumph, and sings "For I Am a Pirate King." Roth uses time-lapse photography as a comic device to show us the gallery filling up for the opening of Blue's show. When things are in full swing, Blue's old boss from the printshop comes over to congratulate him and to twit him, too, about his having been fed up with porno stuff; it's a fine small exchange.

If the movie is a little unformed, that's because Roth is attempting to be truthful to his own experience and the lives of those around him. He's trying to express lives in flux. This is the sort of attempt that usually turns into an unreleasable picture, a straining-for-seriousness embarrassment. But Roth has his wits about him, and Peter Coyote rings true whether he's drunkenly razzing Chuck King or sobbing in a crowded diner. "Heartbreakers" becomes more involving as it goes on, and when it's over, you feel you've seen something (even if you're not quite sure what).

"Desperately Seeking Susan" is a mutant of some sort, an attempt at screwball charm that can make your jaw fall open and stay down until the rest of your head joins it. (A friend of mine says that this picture is for people who grow up on rotoscope animation and prefer it to the real thing.) The director, Susan Seidelman, pulps her actors; she wipes them out and turns them into cardboard. All their responsiveness is cut off—there's *nothing going on* in them. No subtext—nothing. This flatness must be part of what the admirers of the film (it's being widely praised) think is new. Seidelman doesn't show any interest in drawing us into the action, either. This can make the movie

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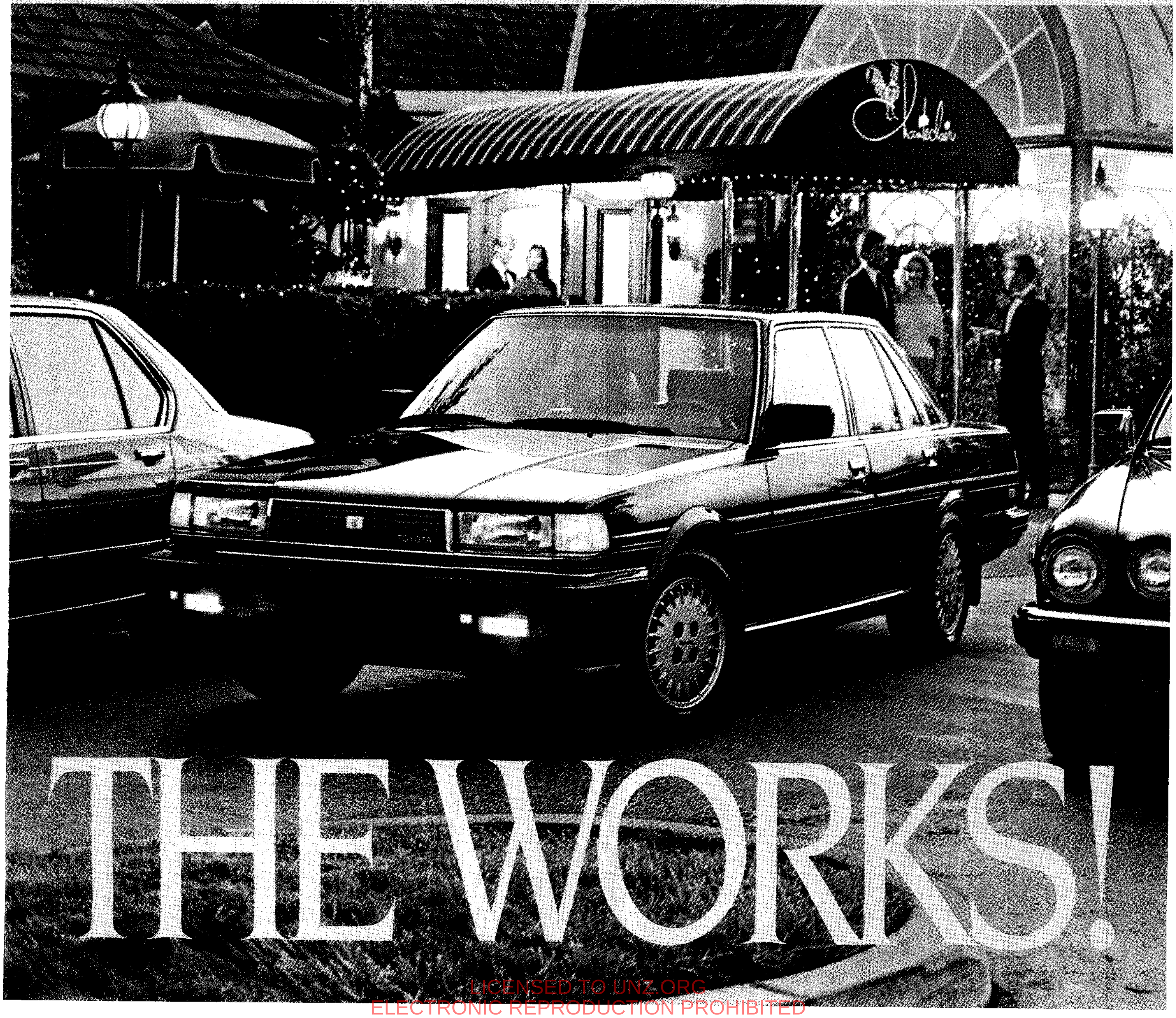

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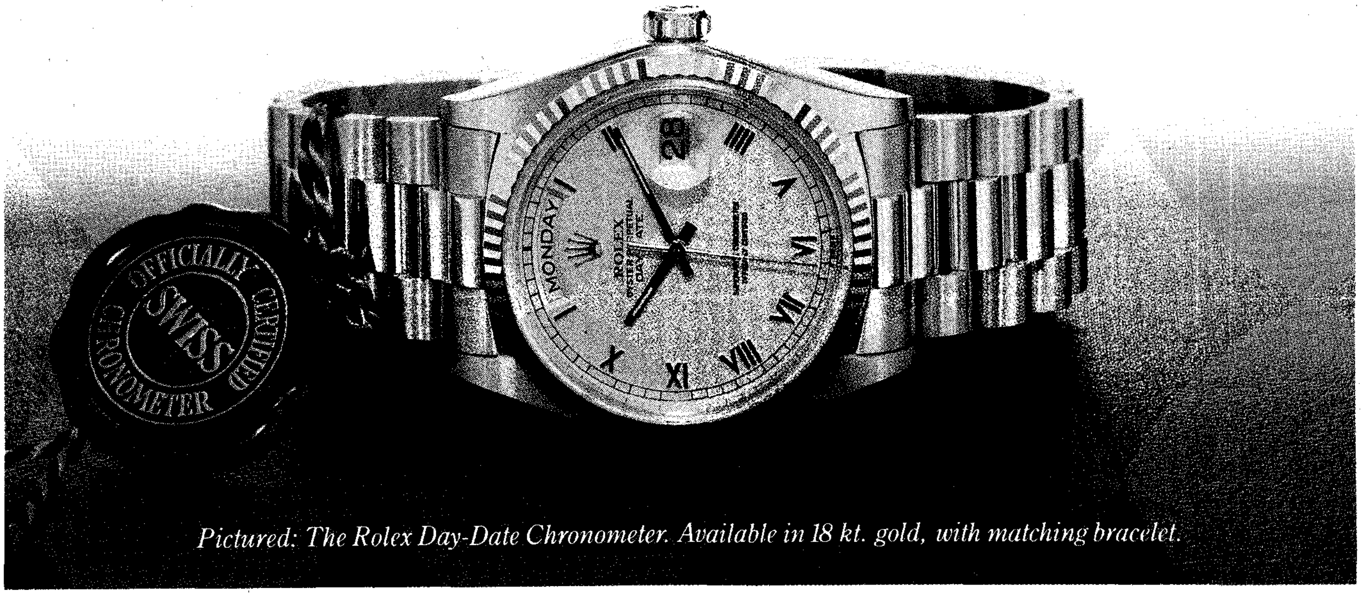

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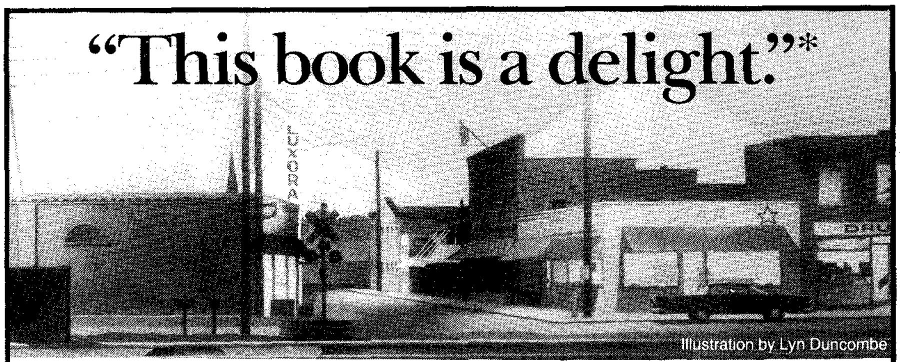
seem very postmodern. Set in the punk world, it's a mistaken-identity fantasy about doe-eyed Roberta (Rosanna Arquette), a suburban housewife in New Jersey who becomes fixated on a drifter named Susan (played by the rock star Madonna). Susan's lover communicates with her through the personals columns, and Roberta, imagining that Susan's life is full of the passion that's missing from her own, goes to lower Manhattan and tails her. And the picture chases after Roberta, who's meant to be adorably dopey. But with scenes that have no pulse or rhythm, and dialogue that makes you cringe, dopey is all that Rosanna Arquette can manage.

The movie doesn't have a story—just a story line. A klunk on the noggin turns Roberta into an amnesiac, she gets a job as a night-club magician's assistant, is pursued by a killer who thinks she's Susan, falls in love with the projectionist at the Bleecker Street Cinema, who also thinks she's Susan, is put in jail as a prostitute, and on and on. How did this script (by Leora Barish) ever get produced? Nobody comes through in the movie except Madonna, who comes through as Madonna (she moves regally, an indolent, trampy goddess), and the cinematographer, Edward Lachman, whose lighting gives the East Village shops and streets a funky prettiness—like an Expressionist painting of neon squalor and lollipops. Lachman and Seidelman and the production designer, Santo Loquasto, stir up a sense of visual activity, but the transactions between the people on the screen are stupefying (and often in woozy slow-motion, like a rock video going poetic).

When you come out of "Desperately Seeking Susan," you don't want to know who the director is—you want to know who the perpetrator is. Susan Seidelman made a name with her first feature, the 1982 "Smithereens," a moralistic view of a skinny young groupie (Susan Berman) whose tacky efforts to be part of the downtown, punk-rock scene were fun to watch until the picture started using her as a bad example. The movie didn't just set her up as a victim of false ideals; it also delivered the homiletic message that if you're not kind to other people you'll be left alone. The images got grubbier and grubbier as the selfish groupie was finally utterly humiliated and was on her bedraggled way to being a hooker and a junkie. "Smithereens" is one of those dismally naïve movies that make you pay for every smile or chuckle you



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had at the start, but it was brought in for only eighty thousand dollars (it was shot in 16 mm.), and Susan Seidelman, an N.Y.U. film-school graduate, was taken up as a public heroine. And now "Desperately Seeking Susan," which cost five million dollars, is being treated as a fulfillment of the (dim) promise of "Smithereens."

Essentially, Madonna's role as Susan is a continuation of the selfish bad example, but at least this picture is, technically speaking, a comedy, and so the character doesn't have to pay for her narcissism. And Madonna doesn't look as if she's about to, even if the script called for it. She has dumbfounding aplomb. In the scenes in which she's in New Jersey, vamping Roberta's square husband, who's in the hot-tub business, she luxuriates in suburban materialism as if she'd discovered the pleasures of imperial Rome. The film has its myth structure: Roberta is the good girl who gets mixed up with Susan the bad girl and is liberated. But its only promising moments are in the possibilities for a reversal—when Madonna suggests that suburban comfort might be just the ticket for a girl who's been hustling for her keep.

An example of the moviemaking technique here: Susan goes into one of her old, nocturnal haunts and runs into an acquaintance—the cigarette girl—who is presented to us in a shot that starts with her legs and travels up her body; we're appraising her flesh, like a roué. Susan says something to her, and moves on; the other girl is of no further consequence.

To quote Bernardo Bertolucci, who was quoting the Brazilian Glauber Rocha, "A film director is the man who finds the money to make a movie." That basic definition holds for women, too, and Susan Seidelman has met it—twice. She has also been lucky: the audiences at "Desperately Seeking Susan" seem willing to accept her amateurishness as a confirmation of the happy, New Wave innocence of the movie. ("See," Seidelman is saying, "I'm just as dopey as my heroine.") But actors ought to be cautious: what she does to Rosanna Arquette could happen to anybody.

—PAULINE KAEL

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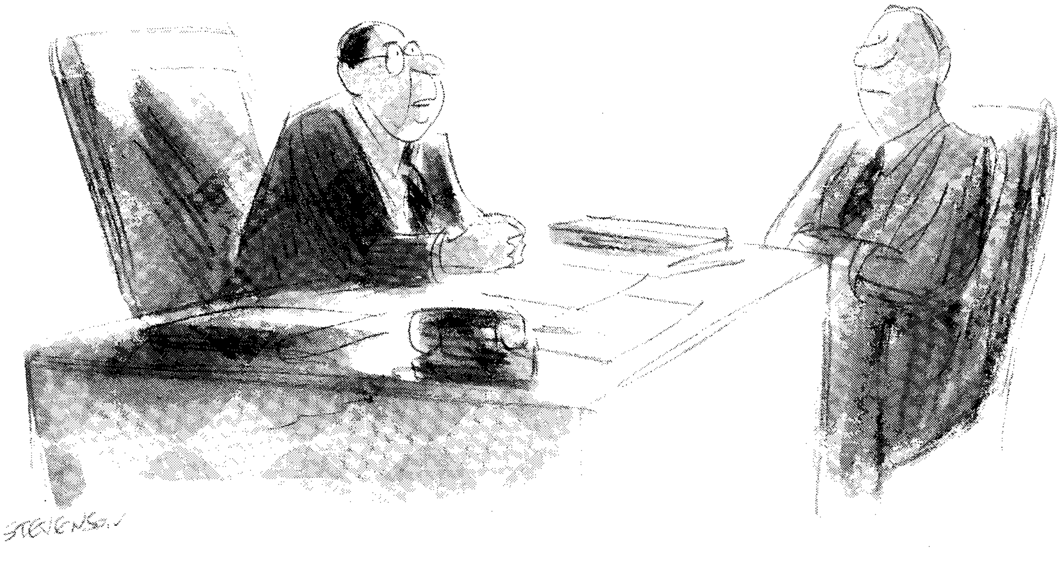
MUSICAL EVENTS

Dedication

THE Metropolitan Opera's Easter revival of "Parsifal" was very well conducted and very well played. There are occasions when a listener seems to know from the opening bars that an evening is going to be good—or no good. The opening of this "Parsifal"—the five and a half bars of unison line ascending through an octave, then falling back—gave assurance of a lovingly rehearsed, pondered, serious performance. Wagner's marking for the passage is "very slow" and "very expressive," and it was both. The timbre is complicated: clarinet, bassoon, and one player at each desk of the violins and the cellos, muted; English horn joining in at the crest of the phrase and then falling out again. James Levine, conducting, and his players made it marvellously eloquent—a unison of blended, living, subtly shifting colors. There are two sixteenth notes in the phrase. Felix Mottl, who helped to prepare the première of "Parsifal," in 1882 (and also prepared the Met stage première, in 1903), edited a score of the opera to which he added numerous extra indications, musical and scenic, based on his observation of the Master at work. Under the opening bars he has the footnote "The sixteenths always tranquil and drawn out." ("Don't hurry the little notes; sound them; enjoy them; give them their full value—and then some" is a maxim apt to the execution of many slow melodies.) Mr. Levine didn't skimp them. And by his broad, tenderly weighted delivery of the bars he laid surely the foundation for the great span of music that ended, in the same key, nearly five and a half hours later. "Parsifal" is a work that moves slowly in some ways, but few operas are more richly packed with incident calling for bar-by-bar concentrated attention. Lucy Beckett, the author of the Cambridge Opera Handbook for "Parsifal," after devoting more than four pages of her synopsis chapter to just four minutes of the work (the first dialogue between Parsifal and Gurnemanz in Act III), says, rightly, "Nothing happens—two characters stand still on the stage and sing in turn, while a third listens—and yet a great deal takes place." Bayreuth is the house for "Parsifal," but there is something to be said for hearing it in a conventional theatre with an open orchestra pit; as Richard Strauss once remarked, "many of the inexhaustible riches of the scores are lost at Bayreuth." At the Met, one is in closer contact with the eventfulness in the orchestra. This may not be what Wagner intended, but it provides a complementary revelation of the opera. Mr. Levine (who is now also Bayreuth's regular conductor of "Parsifal") obtained a broad, smooth sound, not a fierce one, and a balance that allowed the voices to come through almost as freely as they do at Bayreuth. And in New York he has a finer orchestra. The only passage that disturbed one was his hearty handling of the communion hymn. He invested it with a "Pomp and Circumstance" swagger. But Wagner marked each phrase of the hymn to begin piano and to swell only in its final bars to full-throated affirmation: that way, it could seem devotional.

Kurt Moll sang his first Met Gurnemanz. He gave a wise, noble performance, especially notable for clear, telling pronunciation of the words—for utterance in which consonants, vowels, sense, and sound made one memorable shape. His voice is powerful, steady, and firmly focussed, without woofiness; he drew precise and beautiful lines. In the rapturous outbursts, his tone did not flower as generously as Ludwig Weber's once did, but since Weber there has perhaps not been a Gurnemanz more poetic or more moving. (Hans Hotter was as poetic and moving but less firm of voice.) Leonie Rysanek sang her first Met Kundry. She left it late. In the big scene of Act II, she sometimes felt her way into each sustained note (while little notes fell by the way) and then opened into it; this made the slow phrases sluggish. When, on the other hand, she sang impetuously, she lost control of the line. Act II calls for a lustrous vocalist at the height of her powers; otherwise Kundry is not exactly a "singing" role. Her part in Act I is largely exclamatory ("Hier! . . . Nimm du! . . . Balsam"), while in Act III she is onstage for the full eighty minutes but sings only four notes. (Timings of this act vary from sixty-five minutes, in Pierre Boulez's Bayreuth performance, to ninety, in Toscanini's.) Miss Rysanek is very good at exclamations, as she is famous for her screams. "Kundry emits a horrifying yell" and "Kundry gives vent to a howl of despair, dropping from the greatest force to a frightened whimper" are directions in Act II which she fulfilled memorably. But it was as an actress that she triumphed, revealing in each move, gesture, or episode of stillness the woman that Miss Beckett calls "certainly the



"You know what I'd like to do, Caslow? I'd like to create a far-reaching, innovative program that will open a lot of channels, offer great opportunities, link up with all kinds of things, and enable something or other to happen. Any ideas?"

strangest and perhaps the most profound of all Wagner's characters."

Jon Vickers returned to the title role—which he has been singing for over twenty-five years—with undiminished vocal vigor and with force of character perhaps even greater. In Act I, as an impulsive boy he was visually unconvincing, and his timbre was too mature, too heroic; but there seemed to be limitless grandeur and gravity in the Parsifal of Act II (after Kundry's kiss has changed him from heedless youth to holy redeemer) and of Act III. Spiritual radiance appeared to flood him. Sympathetic pain rent him. The combination of earnestness with compassion, of sternness with sweetness was overwhelming. It was not a comfortable performance. The confusion of Parsifal with Christ is Kundry's—the heated Kundry of Act II—not Wagner's. Parsifal (I quote Miss Beckett again) "must not be seen as Christ, the Redeemer, but only as a man redeemed, who nevertheless carries the responsibility of revealing Christ's continuing redemptive power to the world." Yet Mr. Vickers' and Miss Rysanek's reënactment of Christ and the Magdalen and his mystic celebration of the Last Supper were so vivid as to make their presentation in a common playhouse almost unseemly. Still, the Met program translates Wagner's term for "Parsifal," *Bühnenweihfestspiel*, as "stage-consecrating festival play," and in a performance like this the Met stage does become a consecrated place. Mr. Vickers is a tenor who avowedly "carries the responsibility of revealing Christ's continuing redemptive power to the world," and he does so here in a performance that transcends mere aesthetic appraisal. On that lower level, however, let it be noted that, although a brutal snarl entered his timbre at times, usually on an *e* vowel ("*e*wig"), the *ai* and *a* ("*ei*ne W*a*ffe"), *o* ("*O!*"), and *i* ("schl*ie*sst") sounds rang out with force and freedom. And noted, too, that today there are no other tenors, and few singers, who interpret with such intensity.

The rest of the cast was Met routine. The performance was dedicated to the memory of George London; he and Hotter were the great Amfortases of their day. The part was sung by Simon Estes—an unsatisfactory performer, for although there are striking sounds in his voice, he tends to bugle them out at the audience in a way that says "Admire me" and undermines belief in the character he portrays. Klingsor was Morley Meredith. Titurel was Julien Robbins, admirably dark and steady. The knights, squires, and flower maidens were cast with the regular Met comprimari. Some of them were good. But it's hard to believe that if Mr. Levine carefully combed through his company, choristers included, he could not assemble posses of steadier, smoother, well-matched voices to fill these important roles. If there are no poetic, radiant contraltos left in the modern world (and I can't think of one), perhaps the utterance stealing from on high at the close of Act I should be entrusted to a countertenor—Drew Minter, Jeffrey Gall—who could invest it with the beauty and significance it requires.

The production, designed in 1970 by Robert O'Hearn and directed by Nathaniel Merrill, is undistinguished. It's Wieland Wagner softened around the edges. It adds nothing, but it's not offensive. (The only absurdity now is the entry of the knights in Act III, staggering in lockstep like drunken sailors.) There's a sad lack of color, however. Wagner's Hall of the Grail glittered with bright mosaics, and his flower garden was gaudy. Here the Good Friday meadow remained drab even while the orchestra painted the bright burgeoning scene. (The audience had to carry into the theatre the sight of the city outside, bursting with the annual miracle of spring.) The lighting, uncredited, was careful, except when it belied Gurnemanz's remarks in Act I that "the sun is high now" and in Act III that it is noon.

The first-night Met audience gave its own virtuoso performance, by sustaining a steady obbligato of open, unstifled coughing for over five hours. (Each passing hour was signalled by electronic beeping from unmuted wristwatches.) Seldom did two consecutive bars go by undisturbed by coughers, answering one another from side to side of the theatre, now high, now low, like farm dogs in the hills on a moonlit night.

THE opening notes of the "Parsifal" prelude, with the same note lengths, occur in the long melody at the start of Beethoven's A-Flat Sonata, Opus 110, and Wagner's theme closes into its cadence and into a stirring of A-flat arpeggios much as Beethoven's does. Wagner's thoughts moved to Beethoven's late sonatas while he was composing this music. On September 25, 1877, Cosima noted in her diary, "R. says that, if he were to try to visualize Beethoven 'in his starry glory' he would have to think of the second movement of Opus 111 (the Adagio with Variations); he knows nothing so ecstatic, yet at the same time it is not at all sentimental." On the twenty-sixth—which Cosima recorded as "a strange, wonderful day"—he played the "Parsifal" prelude to her, from the orchestral sketch: "Wonderful mingling in the prelude, of mysticism and chivalry. The D-major modulation is for him like the spreading of the tender revelation throughout all the world." Their conversation turned to Christ: "The Gospel account of the day before His death mankind's most sublime achievement, incomparable, divine!" Musical settings of that Gospel account—by Schütz, by Handel, above all by Bach—have been among musical mankind's sublime achievements.

ON Good Friday, in Alice Tully Hall, the Florilegium Chamber Choir and Baroque Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Rice, sang and played Bach's Passion According to St. John. There were twenty-eight choral voices, a band of seventeen, and continuo shared between a harpsichord, played by Miss Rice, and the Tully Hall organ, played by Walter Hilse in semitone-downward transposition to match the Baroque pitch of the others. (The use of the harpischord, as Arthur Mendel says in the introduction to his edition of the Passion, "has little historical justification" but is "in no way artistically disturbing.") It was a well-paced and well-balanced performance, cleanly and vigorously sung, with variety—but not exaggeration—of expression. Florilegium has become a much stronger chorus than it was three years ago. A new English translation, by Miss Rice, was used. I was brought up on the Ivor Atkins edition of the St. John Passion and the Elgar-Atkins edition of the St. Matthew, both published by Novello. ("The treatment of Bach's recitative in relation to the English Bible marked an important stage in the appreciation of Bach's Passion settings in England," says Grove.) In America, Henry S. Drinker's translations (given new currency by the New Bach Edition vocal scores, published by Bärenreiter) and, for the St. John, Mendel's revision of Drinker, published by G. Schirmer, are familiar. An announcement of the Rice version said, "Unfortunately, most published translations of the St. John Passion reflect the language used in the King James Bible." Fortunately, Miss Rice did not stray disturbingly far from that language. And the Evangelist—Frank Hoffmeister, who was clear, direct, and admirable—sometimes returned to the Mendel text. In the arias and chorales, Miss Rice sought to avoid "Victorian-style poetry." The soprano aria "Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten" was translated by Atkins "I follow, I follow, in gladness to meet Thee," which fits the music well. Mendel has "I follow Thee also with joy-lightened footsteps." Miss Rice's "I'll follow Thee gladly and cheerfully serve Thee," although adding a new idea, improves on Mendel, if not on Atkins. A few things in her version jarred: "verlacht, verhöhnt und verspeit," in the chorale that opens the second part, became "taunted, flaunted, and defiled," and, in the penultimate chorale, "O hilf, Christe, Gottes Sohn,/durch dein bittres Leiden" was most oddly rendered as "When the world with devils filled/threatens to undo us."

TWO days earlier, in Carnegie Hall, there was a St. John Passion—or, rather, a Johannes-Passion, since it was sung in German—which opened Carnegie's "Choral Celebration of Bach." The St. Matthew Passion—the Matthäus-Passion—followed on Holy Saturday, and the B-Minor Mass on Easter Day. All three were conducted by John Nelson, played by the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and sung by the American Boychoir and the Male Choir of St. Luke's. Elly Ameling was the soprano soloist of the St. John and the Mass, Sylvia McNair of the St. Matthew. Jorma Hynninen sang Christ in both Passions. Chris Merritt was the Evangelist of the St. John and the tenor soloist of the St. Matthew. The countertenor Paul Esswood, the tenor John Aler (Evangelist of the St. Matthew), and the bass John Cheek sang in all three works. It should have amounted to something marvellous. It didn't, for reasons hard to understand. The choir sounded thin and weak; in the St. John it was not until the final chorus that it produced any real *tone*. (There were twenty-two trebles, and six men to a part in the St. John and the Mass, four to a part in the double-choir St. Matthew.) Carnegie Hall is smaller than St. Thomas's, in Leipzig, but also a good deal drier; it doesn't "fill out" voices as church acoustics can. Odd things happened to the balance. In the "Qui tollis," two (modern) flutes drowned the full chorus. But often the orchestral playing seemed indistinct. The throbbing bass notes of the "Crucifixus" ran together. The lack of a crisp, solid organ, such as underpinned the Florilegium choruses, was felt; there was just a whiffling little positive organ (two of them in the St. Matthew), adequate for accompanying recitative and aria, not for the full ensemble.

To undertake three immense, engrossing choral masterpieces in the space of five days was no doubt presumptuous—too much to ask of any singers and players. Yet the works had been carefully prepared, and Mr. Nelson had clearly given thought to their architecture and to the style of execution. The performances foundered, probably, on his fondness for excessively, eccentrically brisk tempi. Singers and players seldom had much chance of listening to themselves and to each other, of tuning and shaping their phrases in balanced counterpoints or full, sonorous harmony. "Ich folge dir" was pushed through at such a lick that Miss Ameling and the flutes could not breathe and define their lines or answer one another in happy dialogue. Likewise the "Laudamus te," with Kathryn Bouleyn, the second soprano of the Mass, and the solo violin. "Cum sancto spiritu" aspired to the condition of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream" scherzo. When Mr. Nelson did give the music time to register, there were some wonderful moments. One was the choral cry "Wahrlich, dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen," in the St. Matthew. The Benedictus was not taken too fast, and Mr. Aler and the solo flute could both be eloquent. Nor was the Agnus Dei, of which Mr. Esswood—who until then had sounded frayed of voice—gave an exquisitely molded and moving account.

—ANDREW PORTER

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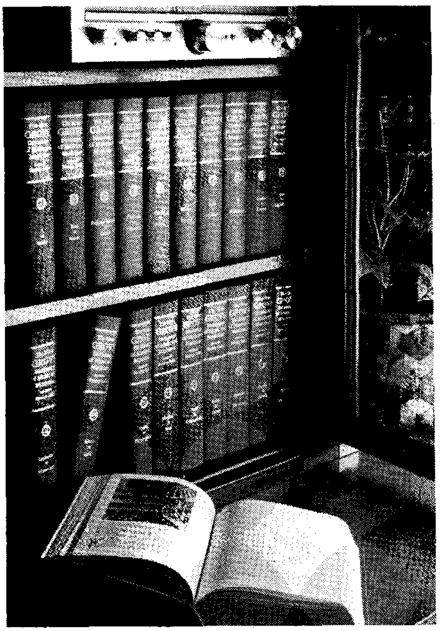

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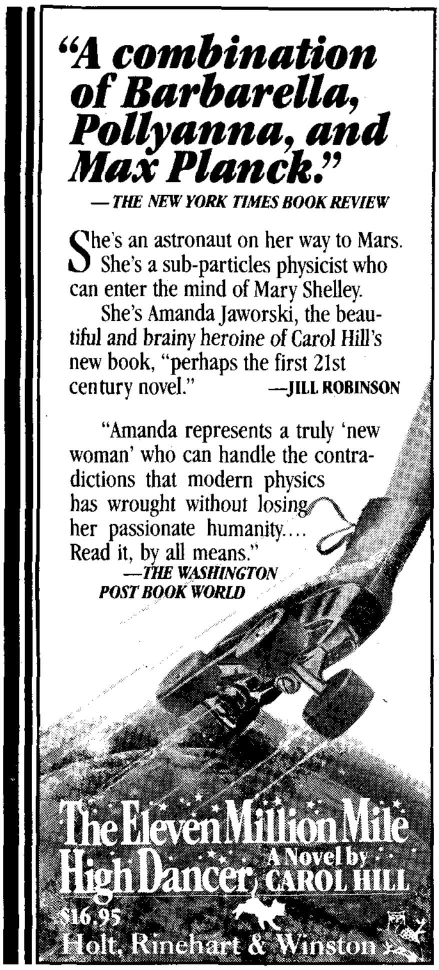

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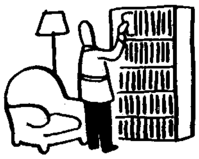
BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION



The Tenth Man, by Graham Greene (Simon & Schuster; $14.95). Mr. Greene tells us in an introduction that this short novel was written in 1948, at about the time of “The Third Man,” and that it passed out of his mind and into the archives of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, from which it only recently surfaced. It is not much of a novel, or even much of a fiction written for the screen. It tells of thirty French civilians in a Nazi prison who draw lots to see who will face a firing squad. One of three losers is a rich Paris lawyer with a country house, and he offers his entire estate to anyone who will take his deadly place. A sick man with a needy mother and a twin sister agrees to die for their benefit. The war ends, and the lawyer, driven by guilt and curiosity, finds his way back to his house. The plot then utters the first of its endless creaks. Portentousness is writ large on every page, in action and in metaphor: “They couldn't, like duelists, use the same weapons: his own strength was matched against the crippled boy's wounding tongue which bore the bedsores of a long sickness.” There is also, even in this feeble effort, the author's agonized Catholicism: “ ‘You're one of the unlucky ones who believe,’ he said gloomily.”

The Rape of Shavi, by Buchi Emecheta (Braziller; $12.95). When a giant bird trailing fire and smoke crash-lands in the Saharan kingdom of Shavi and seven ugly creatures (albinos? lepers?) stagger from the wreckage, King Patayon the Slow knows that Shavi will never be the same. Even if birds had not been held sacred in Shavi since it was founded, by refugee slaves, five hundred years before, the crash's survivors (refugees from North America and Europe, fleeing imminent nuclear war), being guests, would have been treated well. Even though they are treated well, one of them behaves badly: just how badly, only the women of Shavi know. Although the women can keep this evil deed secret, they cannot prevent its consequences. Meanwhile, peace talks continue between the superpowers, and so the destruction of Shavi's precarious culture takes months instead of minutes. At the end, a few Shavians sadly survey their own wreckage, but Mrs. Emecheta gives them another slow king, and he holds out hope. A wise and haunting tale, which has already been published in the author's native Nigeria and in Great Britain, and deserves better than this typo-filled edition.

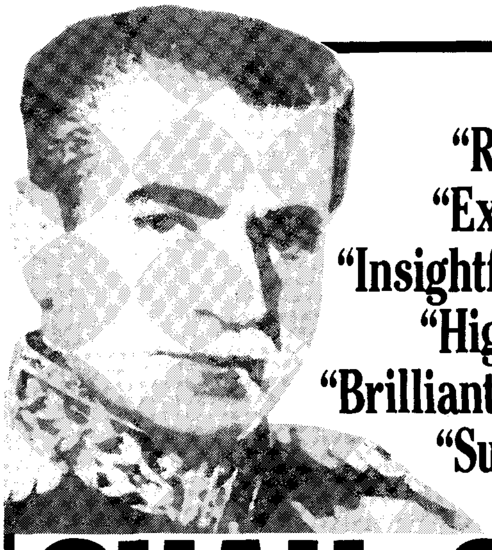
Note: “Home Truths,” a collection of stories by Mavis Gallant, has been published by Random House ($17.95). Nearly all the stories originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

Deceived with Kindness: A Bloomsbury Childhood, by Angelica Garnett (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $14.95). When her mother, Vanessa Bell, told the author (in her teens) that Duncan Grant, and not Clive Bell, was her father, she hid her euphoria and “hardly batted an eyelid.” A few years later, she punished her parents, and also herself, by marrying David Garnett, who had once been her father's lover. In an epilogue to this troubling memoir, the author credits Karen Horney's post-Freudian theories about neurosis and narcissism with freeing her from that unhappy marriage, and with enabling her to write the preceding hundred and seventy-two pages (seven years in the making), which explore the debilitating effects of her “Madonna-like” mother's “propitiatory attitude, as though I held a weapon in my small, fat hands.” When Angelica Garnett was a child, her idol, Roger Fry (who had also been her mother's lover), arrived one day with asparagus. “I had made up my mind to dislike it simply because everybody was so concerned I should do otherwise, but when it appeared on the table, limp rods of jade and ivory, I allowed him to persuade me to try it—and then, naturally, could not have enough.” Psychoanalysis aside—what a shrewd self-portrait this is—“limp rods of jade and ivory” is as good a verbal painting as Bloomsbury produced.

Microworlds: Writings on Science Fiction and Fantasy, by Stanislaw Lem (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $14.95). In this collection of essays Mr. Lem (who was born in Poland in 1921) argues that an age dominated by empiricism and technology needs a fiction conversant with the discoveries and speculations of science. As models he holds up H. G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon, who created new narrative forms to deal with such themes as the nature of intelligence and the fate of the universe. Precisely because he expects so much, he is appalled by the "pulp of materials, destitute of intellectual value and original structure" that he sees masquerading as science fiction today. His attitude is summed up in the title of one essay: "Science Fiction: A Hopeless Case—with Exceptions." The two principal exceptions he cites are the late American writer Philip K. Dick and the Russian brothers Arkady and Boris Strugatsky. Mr. Lem feels that science fiction suffers most from a lack of honest, informed criticism, capable of discerning the rare good book amid an "ocean of trash." To this rescue operation he brings a wide-ranging erudition and a savage contempt for artistic compromise. The quality of the translations in this collection is uneven; no fewer than eleven translators are credited with having worked from texts in Polish and in German, and, in one case, from a Hungarian version of a Polish original. One of the essays originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

Significant Sisters: The Grass-Roots of Active Feminism, 1839-1939, by Margaret Forster (Knopf; $17.95). Mrs. Forster believes that the feminist movement has not been understood—that many people, even today, fear that doing justice to women entails injustice to men. She has written these eight short, elegant biographies of English and American women to offer concrete instances of the often desperate need that drove women to struggle for rights we now take for granted. The book starts off with Caroline Norton (1808-77), who began a legal battle and a pamphlet war that brought about the reform of the English laws of marriage and divorce and resulted in the Married



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①*Publishers Weekly* ②*Booklist* ③*N.Y. Times Book Review*
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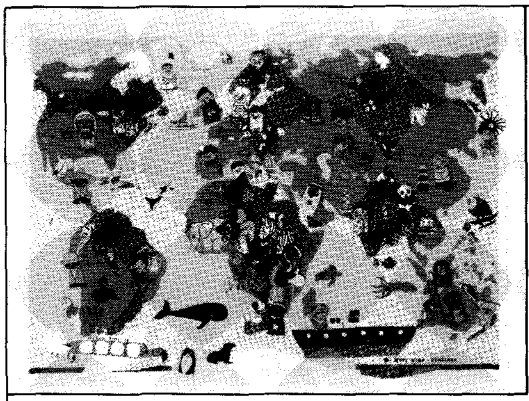
Most of the contents of this book originally appeared in *The New Yorker*



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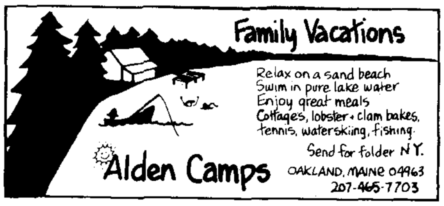

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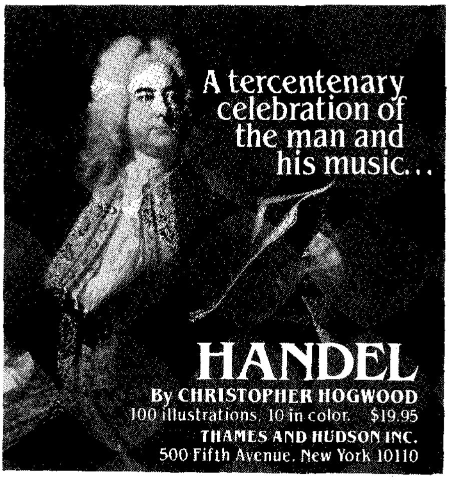

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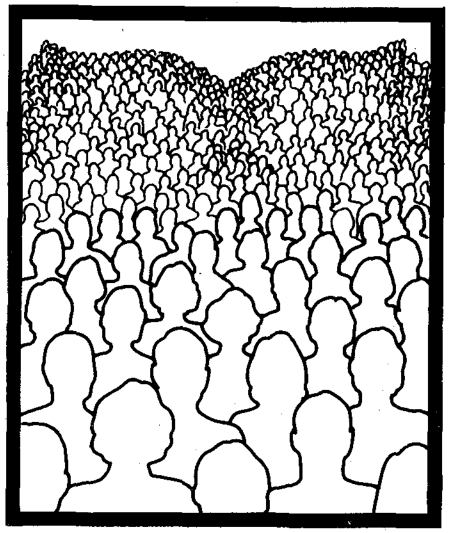

A picture is worth a thousand words… Alice Cooke's drawing, for example, is a powerful image of the community of the book. It was commissioned by the American Booksellers Association for its 1985 theme: "Toward a Reading Society."

Toward? As you read these words, you are already a member of the Reading Society. You are in that picture; you are part of the power of that community. But to one out of three adult Americans the picture is a cruel mockery, for they cannot read well enough to function in our society.

It seems unthinkable that America ranks only 49th in the list of literate nations, but it's true. This figure is one of many from *Illiterate America*, by Jonathan Kozol, who won a National Book Award for *Death at an Early Age*. His new book, "with passion and eloquence, reveals a devastating truth," says Studs Terkel. "Domestic illiteracy, en masse, is a graver threat than foreign weaponry."

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L. L. Day
Editor-at-Large

DOUBLEDAY's Anchor Press publishes *Illiterate America* by Jonathan Kozol. Available at Doubleday Book Shops and other fine booksellers, it may be one of the most important books of our time.

Woman's Property Act of 1882. (Another of Mrs. Forster's octet, the American Elizabeth Cady Stanton, had successfully lobbied for such a law, in 1848, in New York State.) Mrs. Forster's readers will recognize Caroline Norton as the original of Meredith's "Diana of the Crossways," and notice as well that the novelist considerably softened her sufferings, for Diana was childless, while Caroline's husband was legally permitted absolute control over their children, and took them from her. The other heroines of Mrs. Forster's book are Elizabeth Blackwell, the first American woman to go to medical school; Florence Nightingale, who professionalized nursing; Emily Davies, who founded Girton College, at Cambridge University; Josephine Butler, who risked her reputation when she led the campaign to repeal Britain's Contagious Diseases Act of 1864, which allowed the police to arrest any woman they suspected of prostitution, lock her up, and force her to submit to a medical examination; Margaret Sanger, the American nurse who led the movement to disseminate information on birth control; and the anarchist Emma Goldman, who emphasized the importance of love and erotic fulfillment as well as of political liberation.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

PROOF, by Dick Francis (Putnam; $16.95). Mr. Francis's audience grows with every new novel, and every new novel diminishes in quality. In this, his twenty-fourth, he takes well over three hundred pages to tell us how his usual characterless narrator—here called Tony Beach, and a wine dealer by trade—discovers a scheme in which ordinary Scotch whiskey is bottled and sold as something better and vin ordinaire is bottled and labelled as St. Estèphe, St. Emilion, Nuits St. Georges, etc., and how Beach runs the crooks to justice. There is, for once, no sex. There is, as always, a horse race.

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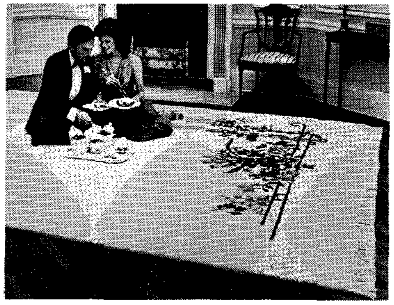

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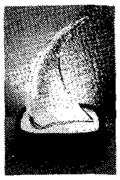

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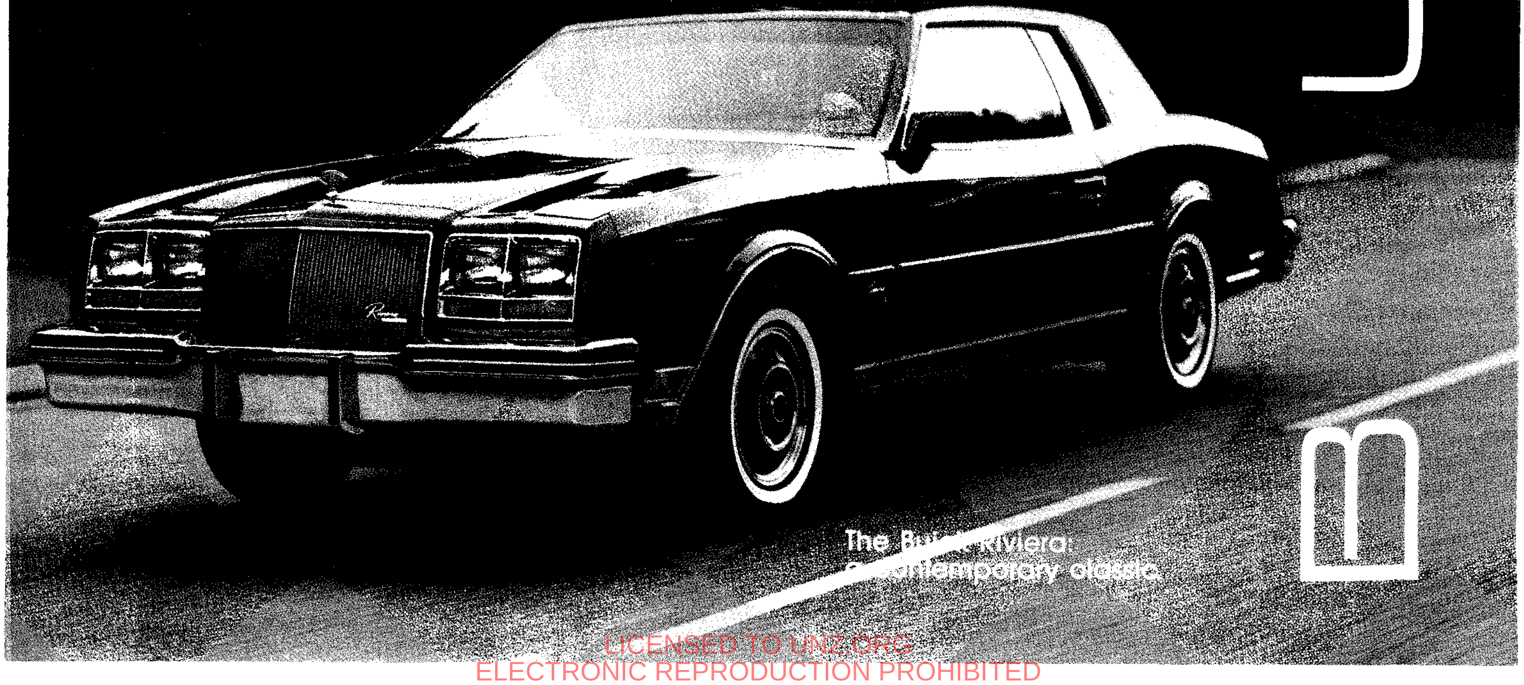

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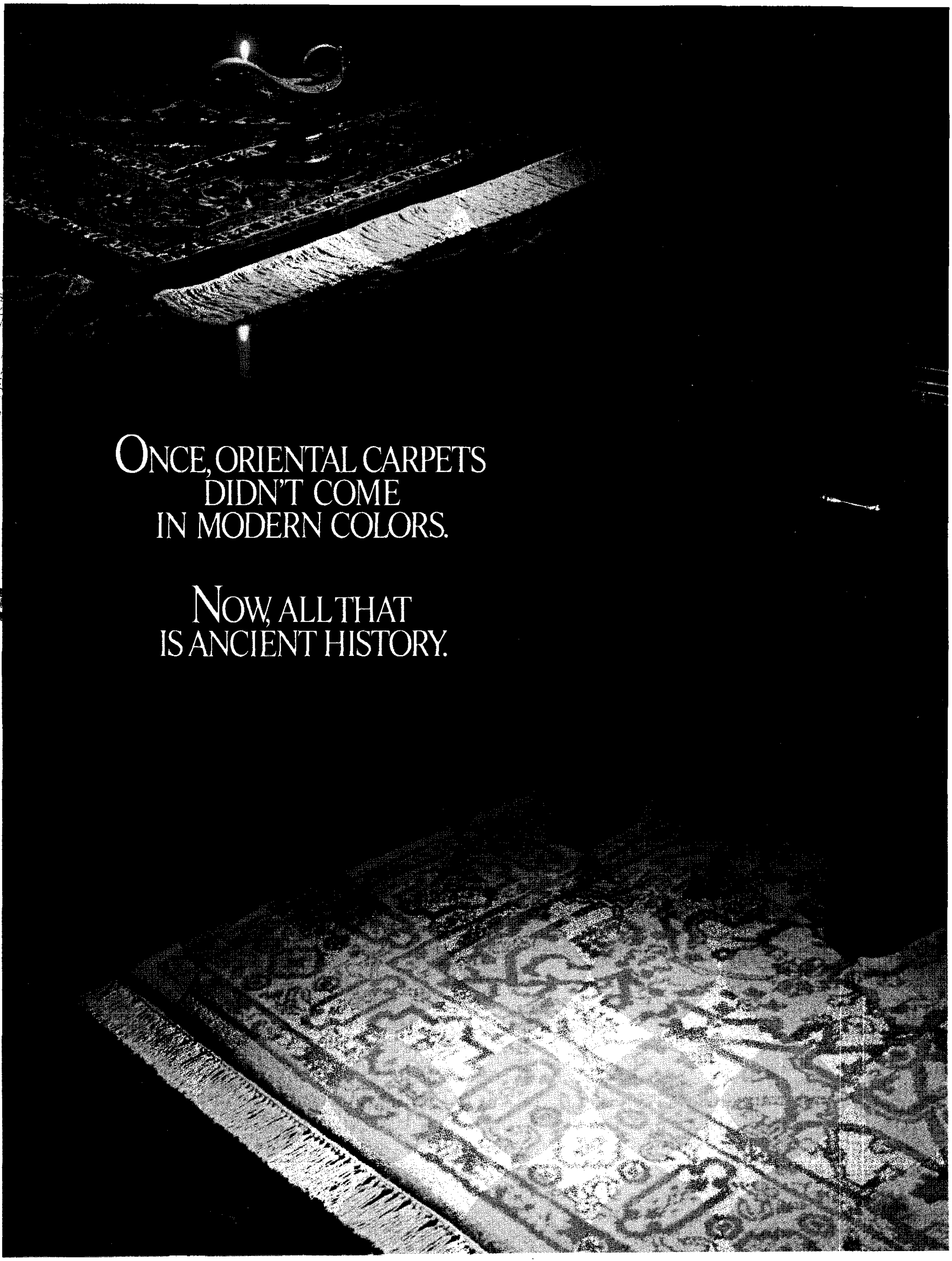
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